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No. 111.

SHE IS COMING.

BY MARY B. COLBY.

She is coming: I hear the tread
Of her little feet,
And I see the poise of her queenly head,
And feel the light that her brown eyes shed
From their depths so sweet.

She is coming: I see the flash
Of two shining rings,
And catch a glimpse of a long blue sash,
And the drooping sweep of a dark eyelash
As she softly sings.

She is coming: I see a curl
Of her bonnie hair,
That the winds lift up with a merry whirl
From a throat as white as a daisy pearl,
In its beauty bare.

She is coming: I catch a sight
Through the trees' dark green,
Of the trailing skirt of a dress of white,
Over which the moon, in its rising light,
Throws a silver sheen.

She is coming: I know it well;
She is drawing near;
I hear her voice like a clear, sweet bell,
And the flowers, and the stars, and breezes tell
She is almost here.

Hercules, the Hunchback: OR, The Fire-Fiends of Chicago.

A REVELATION OF THE GREAT CONFLAGRATION.

BY A. P. MORRIS, JR.
AUTHOR OF "FLAMING TAVERN," "HOODWINKED,"
"BLACK CRESCENT," "BLACK HAND," ETC.

CHAPTER IV. MYSTERY AND PLOTS.

We left Evar Greville, in our first chapter, cowering before the shadowy opposition which seemed to rise, in the gloom of the stairway, like a specter, to unnerve and terrify him.

His muscles weakened, and he came near letting fall the human burden he carried. The feeling of dread, which seized him, now increased, as the ghostly form vouchsafed no answer to his challenge; he felt the perspiration oozing out upon his forehead in icy beads.

"Who are you?" he demanded again, though with faltering voice.

There was a metallic "click," a sliding sound—a bright ray of light darted full in his face, discovering its pallor and startled look.

The figure had opened a dark lantern on him.

Then, from behind the light, which obscured the one who held it, came a sepulchral tone:

"Evar Greville!"

"Ay, Evar Greville!" exclaimed the young man, breathing freer at this evidence of the other's humanity. "What do you want of him?"

"Evar Greville," repeated the unseen, slowly.

"What mummery is this? Show yourself to me, whoever you are."

Had he been unincumbered, he would have sprung forward and solved the mystery, for he was not a coward; yet there was a bewildering air about the strange presence, which might still have held him in awe.

"If you would see my face, then follow—follow, Evar Greville."

The light began to recede. Step by step he advanced.

As they passed a lounge in the entry, he laid Hermoine upon it, still keeping his eyes bent on the lantern.

Along the hall, into a side passage, slowly on they went; the silence grew deeper; momentary chills were creeping over him, for, though he knew the dark visitant was a man, like himself, there was a something, which whispered enigmatical threatenings in his ear.

"How much further? Cease this. Show yourself—If you dare."

The light suddenly paused.

"Evar Greville, what have you done? Beware!—crime has its punishments, sooner or later, and your time may be close at hand."

"What have I done, that you are here to question me?"

"Where is Mortimer Gascon?"

"Ha!—you—what of him?"

"Ay, what of him? Where is he, I ask?"

"What do I know of Mortimer Gascon?"

"He came to your house a month ago," continued that deep, tombly voice. "To-day he lay in a room up-stairs—now he is gone. Where is he?"

"Out! I know nothing of him!"

"You lie, Evar Greville—"

"Ha! you dare—"

"Stand off!" as the young man started forward with fist clenched. "I hold a cocked pistol leveled at your heart. One more step, and you die!"

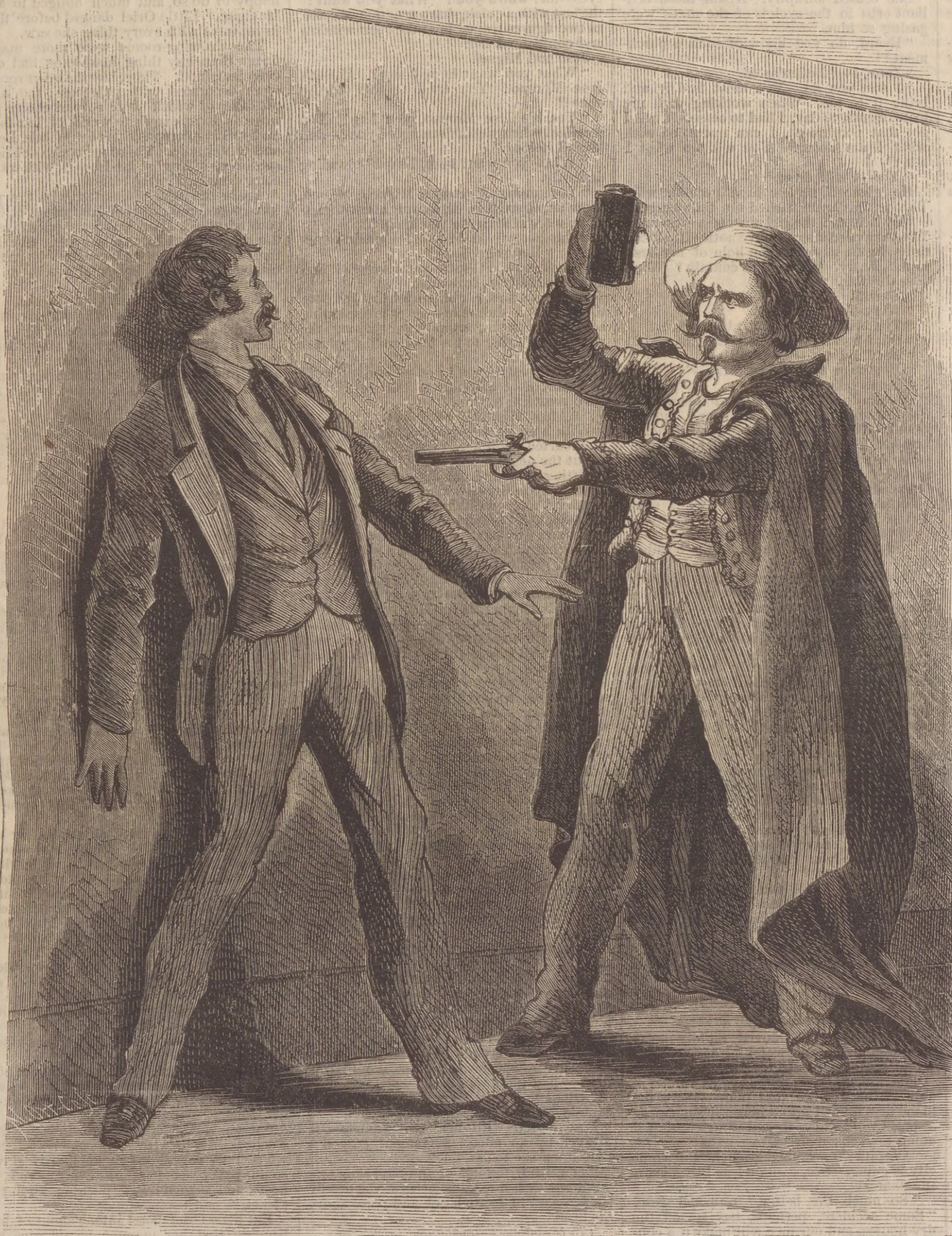
Evar shrunk back. As he did so, the figure spoke again.

"What you can not answer, I can answer for you: Mortimer Gascon is dead."

"Yes, he is dead. What of it?" with an accent of defiance.

"Evar Greville, three years ago a happy family lived in peace in this city. Now, there is not one left. The family left great wealth, which went to one Mortimer Gascon; then, in case of his death, to his niece and nephew, Hermoine and Evar Greville. Your hand struck out the life of each—sent all before the bar of Heaven to charge you as their murderer!"

"It's a lie!"



"One more step, and you die!"

"You managed it all, that you and Hermoine might inherit. But, there is more yet: Hermoine has to learn what I know. Evar Greville, when his parents died, was in New Orleans. He never came North; but another did; that other was named Carl Grand; and it was Carl Grand who had destroyed the family, in keeping with the pledge of the bullet-scar!"

His listener was trembling.

"A lie, I say!—all a lie!"

"You doubt my knowledge of what you have done?—behold!"

The speaker turned the lantern's rays upon his own face. He had no sooner done so than Greville uttered a sharp cry, and staggered backward to the wall.

"Behold!—one victim escaped you." But Greville heard him not; he was lying insensible on the floor, his upturned face white and cold as marble.

A few moments the mysterious personage stood contemplating the motionless form; then, extinguishing the lamp, he stole noiselessly away—retracing his steps along the entry, descending the stairs, and passing out at the front entrance.

"What's that?" he exclaimed, pausing, with the door half closed.

"Ha! ha! ha!" rung through the house in a wild, unearthly strain.

It startled him, for he shut the door with a bang, and leaped down the steps.

When next we see him, he is turning the corner at Washington and Ada streets. A cab was standing near, which seemed to be awaiting him, for he immediately got into it, saying:

"Now then, to the tunnel—go! Ply your whip!"

The vehicle was soon speeding onward, its occupant sitting stiff and silent, while, had it been possible to see his face, we would have marked therein an expression of intense satisfaction.

"Let him tremble now!" he muttered, with a grin of his teeth. "Jose Moreno is not dead yet—Madre! no. Ha! ha! ha!"—a savage chuckle—"look to yourself, Carl Grand! You may think that, as you are

warned, you will escape? Try it! 'Wrong for wrong,' is my motto; and I never forgive!"

When the cab paused at the west end of the tunnel, it was approached by a man who wore a heavy slouched hat pulled down over his brow, till only a heavy growth of beard, and a pair of dagger-like eyes, were visible.

"Come, Miguel," said the one in the cab, throwing open the door.

"Am I not coming?" returned this new party, in a surly tone.

Stepping inside, he seated himself with a bump that threatened to start the springs, and vented a grunt, as he settled himself comfortably.

"You are liquor-soaked!"—catching a dense odor of whisky in the other's breath.

"Can you blame me?"—growlingly.

"Cospita! how long have you kept me waiting?—hours! And between each I wedged a glass of spirits, so that I could count them better."

"I have been to the house of Carl Grand."

"Don't I know that?"—snappishly.

"And I have learned something."

"What is it, then?"

"Mortimer Gascon, the last of the doomed line, was killed to-night!"

"So! Well?"

"Hercules, the Hunchback, was the instrument used by Carl Grand, in carrying out the pledge of the bullet-scar!"

"Hercules, the Hunchback!" cried Miguel, in astonishment; "why, we pitched him from a roof, in New Orleans—"

"True; yet he is here. I saw him. He bore the mark of my knife on his temple."

"The fellow is a cat!—he has nine lives!"

"More: the old wench, his mother—as he calls her—is close by, too."

"No! And we killed her, besides—"

"Tried to, and failed. A word from Hercules, or from the negress, will send us to the gallows, perhaps."

"Cospita! it is horrible to be hanged! This is news. We must find her—eh?"

and the "eh" had a significant prolongation as it came from the Spaniard's lips.

"There'll be no trouble in it. I followed her to her den this morning."

"Good! we'll visit her at once—eh?" This time we'll make sure, purposely to spite the Hunchback. I hate him, because he did not die when we tried to make him do so—well, what ails you, fellow?"

The cab had halted, and the driver was peering in through the box-window.

"I say, is it here you want to stop?" Jose glanced out.

"Yes," he said. "Come on, Miguel."

The two alighted, and paying the man, moved away.

Skulking along South Water street for some distance—proceeding in a manner honest men do not assume—they presently stopped before a narrow private alley, next to a gloomy warehouse.

"Miguel!"

"Well, I am here," growled Miguel.

"Be quick!"

They vanished in the dark shade of the alley, and, with cat-like tread, continued on.

Into a yard of cramped limit; then they advanced to a cellar-door.

"Who's that?" challenged a low voice.

"Jose Moreno."

"Glad to see you, captain—pass."

A man stood flat against the wall of the building, invisible at a distance of five feet. He was evidently a guard.

Our party of two raised the cellar-door, and de-cended—to be faced by four ghoul-visaged ruffians who seemed at first to regard them as intruders, for one presented a cocked pistol.

"Put away your weapon," said Jose.

"Glad to see you, captain!" exclaimed the four, together.

Let us make a note of this significant assemblage.

They were in the rear cellar of the warehouse. On all four sides brackets were fixed in the walls, and from the brackets dark lanterns shot forth their rays to a common center.

A glance at the four men discovers them to be hardened ruffians, strong of limb and muscle, repulsive in feature, by nature devilish, by profession thieves.

Jose Moreno—called their captain—was a Spaniard. He was of slim figure, supple, elastic; his face wearing an expression not overgood, while the glance of his eye was full of a snaky sparkle.

He who accompanied Jose was also a Spaniard. He stood about five feet, four inches; was nearly as broad as tall. His countenance of beard and blot had a treacherous mold; his carriage was daredevil—with a swagger, and jerk of the shoulders; his whole appearance that of a half-rockless, half-cowardly bully, and a man to be feared in the dark.

His first utterance was a snarl at the man who had drawn the pistol.

"Look, now; shall I twist your head off? Hide that pistol, or—"

"Tut! tut! Miguel," interrupted Jose; "what use in threatening a comrade?"

"He's a fool! Let him learn manners. He should know better than— Hold, captain! I don't quarrel with you!" the last as Jose frowned and took a step toward him.

"Quiet, yourself, then," advised Jose; and he continued, to the others: "Our plans, comrades—are they laid?"

"Yes."

"So? Let me see."

One of them handed him a roll of parchment. It was a map of the city.

As he glanced over it, he said:

"These dots, here, tell where you will light the fires?"

"Yes."

"You must be sure to act all at once."

"No fear on that—eh, comrades?" exclaimed their spokesman.

"No fear," answered the three, in chorus.

"They will botch it, I wager—" began Miguel.

"Quiet!" ordered Jose.

"Am I not quiet enough?" growled the Spaniard.

"Do this thing well," continued their captain, "and we'll have the city ablaze. Chicago will fall in ashes—and then we may choose to suit, among the plunder. Every thing is as dry—"

"As I am!" inserted Miguel. "I have not drunk for an hour past."

"Off, now. See that each man applies his torch when the clock strikes twelve."

Each took a lantern from its bracket, and moved toward the door.

"Halt, there!" interposed Miguel. "Will you leave us in the dark? Devil catch you! I'll—hold, captain! I don't quarrel with you!"

Jose had him by the collar.

"That tongue of yours wags too glib."

"And why should it not?" returned the bully, half whining. "I must move it, else it will stick fast, it is so dry. There! we are in the dark. A ghost will grip us!"

"We, too, have business. Come."

"The sooner, the better. Let us be out of this black hole—oh! oh! ow! ouch! oo-oo!"

"Fool! You will have the police down on us! What's the matter?"

In his haste to ascend the ladder-steps, Miguel had tripped and scraped his shins severely.

"O-h! my legs—captain! my legs—they are broken!"

"Bah! go on."

When they reached the gate, Jose paused, and Miguel grunted as he ran against him.

"Sh!"

"Sh!" imitated Miguel.

"Do you know where we are going?"

"How should I, when you haven't told me?" exclaimed the Spaniard, under his breath.

"While our men are setting fire to the city, we'll go to the negress who calls herself the mother of Hercules."

"Good!"

"Sh!"

"Sh!" imitated Miguel, again.

"We know that she buried money in New Orleans—"

"So we do—breaking in; but where? Did we not half strangle her, and then toss her into the Basin? Yet, did we find out? Devil catch her! she has died once, and will die again, before—"

"No harm in trying. She may know us better, now."

"True. Lead on, captain," but he added, quickly: "Look, now; she can fight furiously!"

"You do not fear her?"

"Boo! fear a woman?—not I. Who says I ever ran from a woman?"

"Come on—sh!"

"Sh!" and Miguel tip-toed after his captain.

"See!" exclaimed Jose, suddenly. "Some one is ahead of us!"

"Cospita! yes."

They saw a bright glare in the heavens, and, in the same moment, the quick strokes of the alarm-bells rung out on the air.

CHAPTER V. ZONE AND HER LOVER.

For some time Evar Greville lay insensible in the darkness of the room where he had been confronted by a face which caused him a deep, mysterious, overpowering dread.

But his brain was too excited by the events of the evening—independent of his fear, when discovering the identity of the figure—to permit of a long unconsciousness.

When he recovered, it was with a gasp, and a nervous contraction of limb which brought him to a sitting posture; and he

stared wildly around, trying to pierce the thick gloom.

Then he listened, as if expecting to hear a footfall, or the respiration of another presence.

All was still. His heart thumped; he trembled, despite himself.

Slowly he regained his feet, and groped toward the mantelpiece.

Striking a light, he turned quickly, as though to meet the attack of an enemy lurking near him.

By the stare of his eyes, the flush of his countenance, tremor of either lip, and twitching of the fingers, we see plainly that the strange, unexpected visit had some powerful effect—causing him, even now, in the bright blaze of the chandelier, to glance fearfully about, and breathe like one who has issued, panting and worn, from a deadly struggle.

"Come!" he ejaculated, feverishly. "It was Jose! The grave has, indeed, given up its dead! It is fate! What shall I do?—ah! Hermeine!" He suddenly recollected that he had left Hermeine, unconscious, on the lounge in the entry.

With a quick step he left the room. But she was gone! She was not on the lounge, nor was there any answer when he loudly called her name.

For a brief space he forgot the recent ordeal in the utter astonishment created by her disappearance.

"Poor Hermeine!" he broke forth, muttering. "She is disgraced for life. How I have grown to love that girl—oh! take care, Carl Grand—take care—it is not yet time for her to learn that you are not her brother. You may love her if—what's that?"

He heard wheels outside on the street. A vehicle of some kind passed before the door.

He looked at his watch.

"It is the cab I ordered. I must disappoint Hermeine. I guess he will not be very angry, if I have the money ready when he comes to grieve his dissatisfaction. It is time for me to go and see Zane. And why do I go to see her at all? Yes—I love both Hermeine and Zane."

"Clang! Clang!" spoke the bell in the hall below.

"Hermeine! where are you?" he called out for the last time.

"There was no response.

"Perhaps she has recovered and gone to bed, or into the garden. Pah! I have no time to worry over her now."

Descending the stairs, he snatched his hat from the rack and went out at the front door.

"Time, sir," said the cabman, who stood on the steps.

"Number—Polk street," he ordered, as he seated himself inside the conveyance.

As he was borne along, his thoughts centered again on his late visitor.

"Yes, it was Jose Moreno. What can he mean to do? If I could but get at his intentions, I'd thwart them. Will he charge me, openly, with having attempted his life?—faster, there, driver!—and send me to prison for the murder of Evard Greville? What a fool I was! I might have killed him then, to a certainty, had I not fainted like a baby!" one hand gliding to a revolver in the pistol pocket of his pants. "And, perdition! he might have killed me for revenge, while I lay there helpless. Yes, I have been a fool! Give me another chance, Jose Moreno, and if I don't bore a hole through your brain, then proclaim me to the authorities!"

He continued these meditations inwardly, settled back in the cushions, and folded his arms.

Reaching the house to which Hercules had conveyed Mortimer Gascon, he entered by means of a key which he had in his pocket.

"Now, the direction was: 'Follow to the source of the entry light.'—proceeding up the stairs—"then, the first door to the right—"so—here it is," and Evard Greville found himself face to face with the masked queen, as he opened the door in obedience to instructions he had received.

"Zane, I am here."

"Welcome, Evard."

The words that came from behind the mask were low and sweet; she held out her gloved hands, and he took them in his own with a warm pressure.

"Sit down, Evard."

At one side was a rich sofa, and toward this she drew him, seating him beside her.

"Zane, why is it I am so happy when with you?"

"Perhaps you love me," promptly.

"She is right," he thought; and then aloud: "Yes, Zane, it is because I love you. You are a good guesser. And dare I hope?"

"How can you love one whose face you have never seen?" she interrupted, laughing lowly—a silvery ripple that was like the murmur of a fairy brook.

"I'll venture."

There was a pause. Her beautiful eyes turned to the carpet, and she appeared to be thinking.

"What is it, Zane?"

"Evard, how much would you do for me?"

"Any thing," fervently.

"I am about to ask a favor."

"Well?"

"Do you believe in the art I profess?"

"I never did believe in fortune-tellers, Zane, until I met you. My love for you has converted me."

"I had a dream last night."

"A dream!" he exclaimed, playfully.

"It is the dream which makes me ask the favor. Listen: I thought I was in your house. I was wandering along until I came to a desk. By my side, following close, was a spirit. This spirit bade me open the desk. I did so, and, lo! before me, I saw a roll of parchment, tied with a black ribbon, and the ribbon secured by a black seal—what is it, Evard?"

"Nothing, Zane; go on."

She had felt the hand she held suddenly start and tremble. But he was outwardly calm, and deeply interested.

"I thought this spirit wished me to take up the parchment," she continued; and in the same breath, hastily: "See!—see there! There is the same spirit which followed me in my dream!"

"Zane!"

"Look!" pointing across the room, "see it, Evard!"

"Zane, you jest. There is nothing there."

"Nothing there!" impatiently. "Do you laugh at me? See! it is bidding me go on. Listen!"

Evard Greville was not, naturally, superstitious, though his love for Zane had led into a feeling of awe toward her. He forced himself to believe much of the strange

sayings she had poured into his ears on previous occasions; but never, till now, had she gone so far as to inform him of the presence of a spirit!

He looked at her fixedly, undecided whether to protest or pay attention. And in that indecision he was silent.

Zane went on, rocking slightly to and fro while speaking, as if under some mesmeristic influence.

"When told to search the parchment, I refused, from some cause. The spirit frowned. It frightened me. I put forth my hand to obey—when, just at that point, I awoke. It was not much of a dream, yet—ah! now look!"—again pointing across the room. The spirit is still there! In its hand is the very roll! Hear!—it whispers—"

He could see that her eyes no longer flashed upon him; they were closed.

"It whispers; it tells me you know where that parchment is—tied with a black ribbon, sealed with a black seal. You must procure it for me."

"Zane!"

"Hush! Hear; yes, you must procure it—only you—and bring it to me."

She ceased abruptly. Again those brilliant orbs in the eyelets of the mask were gazing at him.

"Evard, do you know of such a parchment?"

"Zane, I—"

"I see, you do. You must find it, and bring it to me. When working with my instruments, to day, I had to cease. Until I get that parchment, I can not go on with what I am doing. You will do what I ask?"

"Yes—I will do so."

He glanced at her in a peculiar way. Through his brain flashed the following:

"By heaven! the girl must be a sorceress! The very parchment I have noticed, a dozen times, in the secret pigeon hole of my desk in the library. What can it contain? What does she want with it?"

"Hark!"

"What did you hear?"

"The bells! There must be a fire."

"Oh, I heard the alarm some time ago."

"But I did not—"

"You were communing with—"

"Let us take a look."

She ran to the window, and threw open the shutters; for she had heard another sound. The tramp of feet, the rumble of wagon wheels, and the clatter of hoofs, made her fear that the fire was close at hand.

And she was right.

Looking out, she drew back, with a startled exclamation.

"Evard! The heavens are on fire!"

"Say, rather, the whole city is burning up!"

They saw great tongues of flame shooting upward. In the street below, crowds were hurrying past, and yells and curses, and the screams of frightened ones, greeted them, as they remained transfixed in their gaze upon the scene.

Already, a house directly opposite, was catching the hungry element on its roof. A cloud of smoke, and shower of sparks, hurled in their faces by the driving gale, forced them away from the window.

"Come, come! we have not a moment to lose!" she cried, excitedly.

They could hear the great roar of wind and flame as it rapidly advanced.

But Zane paused suddenly in her flight. She had thought of Mortimer Gascon.

"I can not go! Merciful heaven!—be gone, Evard! Save yourself!"

"Zane, are you crazy? I will not leave you here. Come!"

"No! no! I tell you to save yourself! Fly while you have time—"

This is madness! We shall be burned alive! Will you come?"

Just then a voice in the lower hall. It was the Hunchback.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STRUGGLE FOR LIFE.

JOSE AND MIGUEL moved rapidly away from the rendezvous, watching as they went the increasing glare of the fire.

The direction they pursued was almost in a direct line toward that point where the flames first fanned into a blaze, though after a long walk they turned and continued along to Jackson street.

"Cospita!" exclaimed Miguel, "the whole city is going. See, captain! as I live, I saw the flames!"

"So much the better," returned Jose.

"Some accident, perhaps, has set off the dry houses, and our men will make it a conflagration ere it ends. But wait; still now. Here's the house."

"She lives well," commented Miguel, on the building before them, they paused.

"No one is near," said Jose, whisperingly, as he glanced around.

"Yes—there's a dog. Shall I make him snarl for company's sake?" picking up a stone as he spoke.

"Fool! you will ruin us. Come, now, follow."

"Lead on, captain; I'm not afraid."

In the back basement of the house a negro sat rocking a crib, and lowly humming a tune, the words to which she deciphered with much trouble in a worn book which she held.

She was over sixty years. Her face was black as chaos; her form, as if untouched by the wars of Time, was heavy and muscular.

The rays from the lamp on the mantelpiece, fell upon the crib and its occupant—the latter a beautiful boy of not more than five summers. In his face there was a celestial sweetness of expression; the long, dark lashes, pure skin with rosy color, and lips of carmine, contrasting in a fairy picture with the profusion of golden curls that seemed to quiver on the downy pillow.

But he was not asleep, as the woman supposed him to be. Two large, wondrous eyes, deep as the blue of the skies at midnight, were fixed upon her, gazing steadily into the dark-skinned features, and half intent with listening to her weird notes.

After a while the book was lowered to her lap. She looked down at the floor, the humming ceased—reverie enslaved her.

Then her meditations formed into speech.

"Three long years!—three long years!" she uttered, slowly, "and here's little Carl kept from what belongs to him. Six long years!—six long years! and Zane, dear child, hasn't got the records yet. I wonder if she'll ever get them? And that Hermeine, too, has played cunningly. Carl Grand, with all his brain, don't know who she is yet. I wonder if he'll ever find her out? If Zane can get the records, then she won't have any more use for Carl Grand

—and she'll keep her vow. What a pity, when her father killed the mother of Carl Grand, there was life enough left in the dying woman to tell her son she was the victim of a vendetta. And then, how shrewd to write that false note, which set Carl Grand on the track of the Grevilles, and made him swear by the bullet-scar in his palm, never to rest till all of the line of Greville were exterminated. He! he! he! There wasn't much trouble in getting Hermeine to believe half—for that was all he told her. He didn't tell her that he had killed her father and mother; no. But it was a story to suit his plans. Her father and mother?—ha! ha! ha! And he would have killed her, too, only he fell in love with her! What if he knows that Hermeine is playing a game as bold as his own—eh? what then? And what would they both say if they knew I had little Carl here, safe, where they can't?"

"What's that you're talking about, Aunt Lu?"

"The negro started.

"Nothing, nothing, child. Bless the boy! I thought you were sound asleep. There, now, you just turn right over and shut them eyes—ha! ha! ha! What you want?"

The last with a quick, sharp intonation of voice, as two figures leaped in at the open window and confronted her.

Jose and Miguel.

"What you want here, I say? Ah—it's Jose Moreno! You tried to kill old Lu once!"

"Yes, it's Jose Moreno, you hag! You recollect when we half strangled you?—and Miguel helped."

"What you want here, I say?" scowling defiantly.

"Your money!" growled Miguel. "Come, show us where it is, or, by the horns of Lucifer, we will strangle you again!"

"I'm not afraid of you!" defied the negro.

"Better go long."

"Look, now, I'll show you to death!" and Miguel advanced, frowning.

Quick as a flash her brawny arms shot out; there was a dull thud—he went spinning across the room, stumbling, striking the wall, then falling to the floor with a painful snort.

"Devils catch you! you've bruised me!" he snarled, scrambling to his feet. "I'll have your life for that!"

At her, Miguel!" cried Jose.

With long knives gleaming in their fists, they darted upon her.

But the negro was ready.

Lifting the boy from his crib, and perching him upon her shoulder, she snatched up a pair of tongs with her disengaged hand.

At sight of the boy, Jose half paused, and uttered an exclamation of surprise.

But that pause was only for a second. In another moment came the clash of conflict.

Not a sound escaped her lips as she met the fierce attack of the two men—circling, darting, swinging, thrusting, sweeping the tongs above, in front, behind, around her—parrying their knife-blows, and anon dealing a well-aimed stroke that made them stagger and reel.

Now forward, now backward; the bright steel ringing against her weapon, but never touching her. And in her black eyes, there was a burning glow that told of a determination to fight to the death.

Suddenly she became the attacking party! There was a momentous struggle in that right arm of hers, for it bent them back, back until they pressed the walls, and fought desperately now to save their heads from being crushed!

"Ha! ha-a!" she screamed, "I shall kill you both, presently!"

The Spaniards breathed hard. She was battling with a demoniac fury. In a dozen places they were bruised and welled.

In the midst of it she made a misstep, and tripped.

With a howl, they rushed to a fresh assault.

"But, on her knees—for, with her burden, and busy warding off their murderous thrusts, she could not rise—she fought on, fought sternly, terribly, to keep them off!"

"Now!" yelled Jose. "At her, Miguel! Let one take a broken head, and the other stab her for his comrade! But, don't harm the boy! I want him!"

"Dios! you may take the broken head, captain, now, if you wish."

Jose closed with her. Simultaneously, Miguel, by an adroit movement, gained a hold upon the tongs!"

Then, from the lips of the boy, rang one wild, terrified shriek, as he saw the deadly steel ascend in Jose's hand, and poise above his head!

(To be continued.—commenced in No. 110)

Madeleine's Marriage:

OR, THE HEIR OF BROADHURST.

BY MRS. E. F. ELLET,
AUTHOR OF "UNDER THE CLOUD."

CHAPTER XV.

THE PROSPECT OF A CAREER.

MADELEINE awoke late after a restless night, full of wild and terrifying dreams. The light of a clear, cold morning came in through the closed curtains. She had hardly risen when the maid entered, arranged the bath and toilette, opened a wardrobe, and laid out several exquisite morning-dresses of cambric bordered with black trimmings. Then she proceeded to brush her mistress's hair.

The lady submitted quietly to all this; for it seemed a fairy dream, from which she would presently awake. But it was no dream, when from the adjoining room burst in, laughing gleefully, a lovely little creature with flying curls and cheeks like the dawn, robed in an embroidered night-dress, and followed by the nursery maid whose duty, it seems, was to attend upon her.

Oriel was inclined for a game of rumps with her maid; but the sight of her mamma, sitting there so sad and pale, averted her attention. She flew to her, climbed in her lap, and clasped her dimpled arms around her neck, with a shower of kisses.

Madeleine burst into tears.

"Why do you cry, mamma?" questioned the child. "See what pretty things I have, and you, too! And these rooms are yours! Look at this!"

Running back to the chamber, she brought out a splendidly-dressed wax doll, and laid it in her mother's lap.

"See how it opens and shuts its eyes! Oh, mamma, I am so glad we came here!"

After weeping unrestrainedly for a few moments, the mourner composed herself, and tried to take pleasure in seeing her child so happy. When she had finished

dressing, the maid asked if she would go down to breakfast.

Certainly she would go down. And she took Oriel by the hand.

The breakfast-room was smaller than the dining-room, and hung with scarlet damask, facing the east; it had a warm and color appropriate for winter.

The table was small and appeared loaded with silver plate. There was a steaming urn for hot water, and a chocolate-pot of elaborate workmanship, with a coffee-pot, tea-pot, sugar-bowl and cream-jug to match.

A rack of toast and wife muffins, some boiled eggs, and a dish of cold chicken with cream sauce, minced veal, and other light delicacies, were on the table; on the side-board was a substantial cold venison pie, with a ham, a tongue, and various potted meats, all of which were untouched.

Madeleine asked for Mr. Marlitt, and was told he had breakfasted in his own apartments and gone out, but would call upon her in the course of the morning.

When the breakfast was finished, the housekeeper paid her respects to her mistress, and inquired if it was her pleasure to go over the house. "Mrs. Clermont" was happy to do so, and much obliged to Mrs. Hanigan. Little Oriel danced before them in raptures with every thing she saw.

The drawing-rooms were more magnificent than any thing Madeleine had ever even imagined. They, like the other rooms, were decorated with paintings; the most pleasing of which were several choice pictures of *genre*, exquisite works of Landseer, and striking compositions by Wilkie, Leslie and Cattermole. There were also delicious specimens of English landscapes, with water-color drawings in the recesses.

Again she was enchanted with the picture-rooms, and the rich landscapes of Calcott, Stanfield, Daniel, and the paintings of the Flemish and French schools. She had time but for a hasty glance, but internally resolved to spend days and weeks in the study of these masterpieces.

The elegant portraits of Dubufe she thought particularly worthy of attention. Again she stood before the painting in the boudoir, and traced its striking resemblance to her mother's features; learning to her astonishment and delight, that it was really a portrait of that mother, taken before her marriage.

A very handsome room with white silk hangings and white curtains fringed with gold, was appropriated for her morning room, and furnished with a work-table, a drawing-table and easel, a writing-desk and a rosewood harpsichord with flutings of gold-colored silk.

The bedchambers were numerous, lofty, and luxuriously furnished. The suite that had belonged to her invalid cousin, Edward, had been refitted entirely, and the windows commanded a superb view of the park and the lake.

Her own apartments, with the wardrobe stocked with dresses and underclothing, last underwent an inspection. The made-up dresses, the housekeeper informed her, were of merely plain materials, for morning wear; the drawers contained richer patterns, for dinner and evening costume. Madeleine had little pleasure in looking at these. Her heart, as well as her person, was shrouded in mourning.

The housekeeper went out for a few moments, and returned with an antique casket which she set on the table, producing a key fastened to a black ribbon, that opened it.

Madeleine started back almost in fear at the display of jewels! Rubies and emeralds were there, of the purest water, in rich settings of gold, and there was a complete set of pearls more beautiful than she had ever fancied could be strung into necklaces and bracelets. The little tray lifted out, disclosed diamonds of immense value; a full set of superb ornaments.

"These were your aunt's, Mrs. Clermont," said the housekeeper. "Mr. Marlitt bade me deliver them to you, madam."

"These—mine!" exclaimed the widow, growing pale with wonder.

"Indeed they are; and no one has a better right."

Madeleine took the diamonds in her hands. Their luster almost overpowered her sense.

"Will you try them on, madam?" asked the woman.

She studied and laid them down hastily. She decked herself with such ornaments! she, whose only love, lying in his bloody grave, could never see her! She grew sick at heart, and turned away, pushing aside the casket.

But little Oriel burst into a shout of joy, begging that her mamma would give her those beautiful stones!

"No, no, my dear," said Hanigan, "these are for you!" and she took out the pearls, clasping them round the child's neck, forehead and wrists. The little girl danced with delight, and called to her mother to admire them.

Her thoughts went forward to the time when the fair girl might appropriately adorn herself with the brightest pearls, as befitting her birth and expectations.

"And, oh, mamma!" cried the little one, "I am to have a donkey to ride, and you shall take me out in your pony carriage; a real carriage, with a pair of black ponies! Will not that be grand! Shall we go to-day, mamma?"

The housekeeper gently remarked that if Mrs. Clermont would be willing to postpone her drive till after luncheon, the steward was waiting to present his accounts.

Rising quickly, the lady declared herself ready. It seemed a relief to her to be summoned to the performance of any thing like a duty. She bade the housekeeper take charge of Oriel, and descended to the morning-room.

Mr. Marlitt was there, and bidding her good-morning, inquired with apparent solicitude after her health, expressing a doubt if it would not be too much trouble to her to go through the accounts that day. She declared herself perfectly ready, and the steward, Mr. Towers, came in with his formidable bundle of papers.

Madeleine's education in figures had not been very extensive, and the task of going over them alarmed her. She murmured a timid request that Mr. Marlitt, who was about to leave the room, should remain and assist her. His eyes gleamed with satisfaction as he yielded to her wish.

The papers were the leases made out in favor of the different tenants, with the insurance policies, the receipts for the last quarter's rents, etc., etc. Other documents concerned other business matters. There was an elegantly furnished house in Bayswater, which had been let for some years; the solicitors of the late Mr. Clermont had charge of that. But would she prefer to occupy it during the coming London season,

or should it remain with the present occupants?



set my uncle against me; and I robbed his desk afterward, and laid the blame on his adopted daughter; that led to her being turned out of his house. I don't deceive you, Emily; I am a reprobate out and out. But I will reform, if I can have you with me."

"And where first would you take me and my boy?"

"Oh, the boy! Well, we will leave him to comfort the old man for your loss."

"Albert!" cried the girl, recoiling; "do you think I will leave my child?"

"He would be a little in the way, just at present."

"I will never part with him for a single hour!"

"We can send for him when we are settled."

The girl looked around as if she feared some one might overhear her. But only the deep breathing of her child asleep in the adjoining room was heard. She laid her hand on young Morell's arm.

"I will tell you a secret, Albert! I will let you know my plans. My father does not know any thing yet, but I mean that he shall, before I leave him. My voice has come back. I have been laying out a way to earn my living in London and a support for my child."

"You, Emily?"

"Yes! but you did not know what a voice I have had! I had lessons in singing—years ago—and I often went up to the great house, to practice in the music-room! It was there I used to see Mr. Edward—"

"And he fell in love with your sweet voice! I have heard of it. He loved you, and deceived you by the promise of marriage he would have kept, if he had lived."

"I always meant to do something with my voice," said the girl, disregarding his last words; "and since the trouble came on me, I have depended on it, and I have not neglected it. I have sung at more than one provincial concert. I thought I might sing at one of the theaters."

"My poor girl—a hundred singers with better culture than you could have had would be before you! Now your good looks might have some effect! I will take you to the managers, and we will try them."

"It is no joke, Albert! I have a friend in London who knows Madame Binatelli."

"Well?"

"Well—and she, my friend, has almost got the promise from her to get me an engagement at one of the theaters to sing."

"As prima donna!"

"Be silent! You are laughing at me! In the choruses at first. But I shall get on. I will work very hard. If my full voice comes back, I shall not be afraid."

"Then let us go at once, darling."

"I must wait to get my father's consent; and I will not go with you, Albert, unless we are married before I leave home."

"You say nothing, Albert! I suppose you have nothing to say. Thanks for the honor you do me!"

The girl made him a sweeping theatrical curtsy.

"Emily, you mistake me; I was thinking—"

"That you don't want to be incumbered just now! Very well; nor I either. More than that, I will never part from little Edward. Go you then to London—do all you can for me there; help me to begin my career, and when I get my engagement, you can visit me. That is all you can do for me at present."

"When will you come?"

"As soon as my friend sends me a message from Signora Binatelli, that I can have employment, with a salary."

"Perhaps I can do something for you. I will try."

"Oh, if you can, Albert, I shall be so grateful!"

"If you go on the stage, Emily, you will need a wardrobe, and many other things."

"All that must be arranged. I have done a great deal toward it. And I shall be under the signora's patronage."

"She will not like you, you are too pretty. These Italians are apt to be jealous."

"Albert, do not talk nonsense."

"The Italian women bear no rivals. If one of her lovers fancies you, she will have a stiletto for you, or a paper of poison, if you get in her way."

"But I shall not be in her way. She is a great singer, and she will find me ready to do her service."

"You know nothing of London, Emily; you will need me at all times."

"But you shall not come near me, except as a friend, like the rest, you know, till we can be married."

"With my uncle's consent?"

"Or without it, if you have a home for your wife."

"I shall not be always a vagabond, I trust. Well—I suppose I must submit, till I can send you word from my Italian mistress. When did you see Hugh Rawd?"

The girl crimsoned with anger.

"Never, since he brought me that opinion from the lawyer in London—that my marriage was invalid. If I had the papers, I would inquire for myself. If I had been rich, I could have had justice!"

"Who has the papers?"

"Mr. Rawd. He always kept them. He said they were of no use."

"The man is shrewd; if there had been ground to stand upon, he would have stood by you; for it would have been the making of him, I suppose."

"He said there was no ground. If he had any interest in deceiving me, I would not believe him. I would try for myself, even without the papers, if I could!"

"Why don't you, Emily?"

"Hugh Rawd has the papers. I could offer no proof that the ceremony ever took place. Mr. Rawd and my mother were the only witnesses, and it was in the old chapel."

"Surely, you were not fool enough to leave the certificate and other proofs with Mr. Rawd!"

"He took them, at the time, to keep them for me, he said, and afterward he wanted to show them to the lawyer, and consult him about them. When he brought back the lawyer's answer, I asked him to give the papers back to me."

"And did he not?"

"No—he put me off from time to time, saying he wanted to consult some one else. But I must have them before I go. Where is Hugh?"

"How can I tell?"

"You were together, I heard him say. It was some time since."

"That was in Wales. He had some business there of—Mr. Marlitt's."

Desperate as he was, the young man's face darkened when he thought of that fatal night on the cliffs, and what had followed.

"That was an awful affair," he said, in a low tone, "but it led the way to Mrs. Clermont's coming here. They say she can only hold the property by marrying one of the Clermont blood, and it was lucky for her that her husband fell off the bridge that night."

"Why so?" inquired Emily, who knew nothing of the history.

"The old man's will leaves the property to her only if she marries a member of the family; if she does not, it goes to the hospital on the other side of London Bridge."

"But she is here already, as the mistress, and has every thing in her hands."

"That is only for one year. If she does not agree by that time to fulfill the condition, she must give the fortune all up. Now, if I could pass myself off as a relation of old Clermont's, I might be tempted to be a traitor to you, my girl."

"Mr. Marlitt is a cousin of Mr. Clermont's."

"And Marlitt will marry the widow."

"Let him, then, why should I care?" said the girl, wearily. "Though it might have been different, if my rights were established. Now, Albert, it is time for you to go; I expect my father home. Hark, what is that noise in the road?"

She opened the door and looked out. It was the pony carriage, returning from the drive.

"I did not know it was so late. You must go now, Albert!"

"You shall hear from me, Emily, as soon as I can see Madame Binatelli. I want you in London."

"I shall know how to take care of myself here as well as here!" said the young woman, eluding the warm embrace in which young Morell would have folded her.

A doubt of her lover's sincerity had forced itself on her mind.

A third party was here added to the group in a pale-looking child, coming in fretful from the other room, as if unsatisfied with his slumber.

The mother ran and caught him in her arms.

"You love that brat better than me!" muttered young Morell, gloomily.

"And with good reason, Albert. I am sure of his love. Am I not, darling Neddie?"

The young man laughed, and would have enticed the little one from his mother. But the child resisted him and began to cry. The next moment he had snatched a kiss from Emily, and was gone.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DEBUTANTE'S FAILURE.

It was the night of the London season, and the third night of the performance of a new and favorite opera.

The efforts of Albert Morell, aided by the female friend, had been successful in procuring for Emily Watts an engagement to sing in the chorus at the opera house; and her friend's intervention had induced Madame Binatelli to show her distinguishing favor in the way of advice and lessons from an Italian professor for the training of Emily's really exquisite voice.

On this particular night, the sudden illness of an artist who had several roles, made it necessary to supply her place at an hour's notice; and at the recommendation of Binatelli, Emily Watts was invited to undertake the part.

The distinction was one that filled her with apprehension as well as delight. She felt that it was the crisis of her life. If successful, she could command an independent position hereafter; if not, she would be doomed to the chorus as the best she could attain, and would not remain in London.

With a beating heart the debutante obeyed the call to appear in her first scene.

Her manifest agitation commanded the sympathy of amiable persons in the audience, and cordial applause greeted her efforts, notwithstanding that her voice was stifled and her singing far inferior to her usual execution.

She did not see two gentlemen in the theater who were attentively watching her. One, a pale, aristocratic-looking man, rather young in appearance, and dressed with quiet elegance, seated in a private box and holding a bouquet in his hand. The other, in a distant part of the house, an older man, rough and sallow-faced, with a sinister expression in his deep-set eyes, his face partly covered with a black, bushy beard.

When the curtain fell on the first act, the half-discounted debutante, having retired to her room, was seated disconsolately at her table, with a piece of music in her hand. The door was flung open, and Binatelli, elaborately dressed, entered.

Emily saw her fate at once in her cold salutation. Trembling, and clasping her hands, she looked tearfully in the face of her mistress.

"I can do better, dear countess!" she exclaimed; "I was terrified. I will redeem myself."

"You will find it hard!" said the lady, severely. "Indeed, you had better not appear again."

"Oh, madame! pray do not be displeased with me! I will do better—indeed I will!"

"I can not believe it. I know the reason; the public are prejudiced against you!"

"How can that be? I am unknown."

"Not so much so as you think. The scandalous life you led in the provinces—"

Emily started up in sudden terror.

"What is that you say, madame?" she cried.

"Your scandalous life has set the world against you."

"Oh, madame! how cruel, how unjust! You to misjudge me; you, to whom I owe so much!"

"I did not know of it till very lately, or I should not have encouraged you to enter the profession."

"Who has dared to slander me? Tell me, I entreat you, madame."

"No one has slandered you; but—the whole truth has been made known to me."

"The whole truth would vindicate, not condemn me! Give me only time to prove my innocence!"

"You shall have time; do not fear! And I will be your friend, if you will let me."

"You are kind, dear madame!"

Weeping, the poor girl sunk on her knees.

"You must not give way in this manner. You need all your strength. Come, I came to invite you to go to my house after the opera."

"To your house?"

"Listen!" cried the singer, catching her hand and raising her. "Some one is here who is determined to follow you."

"What do you mean?" asked the girl.

"He is a bad man. I will protect you from him. He will go to your house; you shall come home with me!"

"Who can it be?" Emily thought of Albert, but she had seen him lately, and he had promised not to molest her. "Was it a tall, pale young man?"

"Hush!" whispered the singer; "no—not the one you are thinking of; I know him. This one is a rich gentleman; he sat in one of the private boxes. His attentions will do you great harm; he means to visit you; I will keep him away from you!"

"Oh, thanks, madame!"

"When you come from the stage, come directly to my dressing-room and go home with me. Will you do this?"

"Indeed I will, and thank you so much."

The Italian did not mention that the pale gentleman of the private box, whose admiration for the girl she had marked with such alarm, was a lover of her own; a favored visitor for more than a year; and that her apprehensions were the offspring of jealousy.

Poor Emily was in a worse condition for the performance of her part than before. She trembled violently when she went again on the stage, and glanced furtively around. At last her eye caught the figure of the gentleman in the private box.

It was at the moment of the conclusion of a beautiful duet, when the house rung with applause. The gentleman smiled as he met her look, and threw the bouquet he held, which fell at her feet.

Emily's gaze was transfixed. Too well did she recognize that face, and her heart died within her.

Some one on the stage picked up the bouquet and presented it to her. She took it mechanically, bowed her head, and was led off the stage.

Behind the scenes she sunk into a chair, looking so pale that one of the artists ran for a glass of water and held it to her lips.

She begged to be taken to her dressing-room.

As she laid down the bouquet, after reaching the room, she noticed a card, and a folded paper. The paper was a cheque for a hundred pounds. The card bore the name, "Jasper Marlitt," and these words were written under it in pencil:

"I will call on you after the opera is over. Can you let me stay to supper?"

Hardly able to collect her thoughts, Emily thrust the card and cheque into an envelope, sealed it, and with a pencil she took from her bosom, hastily directed it.

"I can not see him. He must have this back at once."

The bewilderment and agitation of these little occurrences were most unfavorable to the self-possession necessary to insure the girl's success in a new part.

When she reappeared on the stage, it was a relief to see that the private-box was empty. Marlitt had left the theater.

With a sigh of thankfulness, she addressed herself to her task. It was creditably performed; but she could not fail to perceive that the manager's expectations were disappointed. She had lost, not gained, by the night's venture.

As soon as she was released from her duties, she hastened to Binatelli's dressing-room, and tapped eagerly at the door. The lady was seated at her toilette; she wore the rich jewels and splendid dress of her part.

"Oh, madame!" cried the girl, "you promised to protect me! I have seen him; he has left the theater! He threw me a bouquet with his card, and says he will call on me to-night!"

"He is a daring man!" exclaimed the Italian, with a dark frown on her brow, and rising.

Emily drew the sealed envelope from the pocket of her dress.

"He sent me money," she said; "it is here with his card. I wish to return them both."

"And the bouquet?"

"I left it above stairs. How shall I return these, madame?"

"Give them to me. I will see him, and give them to him," said the Italian. She took the envelope.

"And, dear madam, will you take me home, as you said?"

"You shall go immediately."

"Oh, thank you!"

The Italian rung a small bell. A boy came in.

"See if my carriage is ready. The one with the colored lamps."

In a few moments the boy returned to say the carriage was at the rear entrance.

"Now you may go—*via cara*," said the lady.

"And you, too, madame?"

"I have to receive a person on business. The carriage can return."

"Oh, I will wait for you, then!"

"No—Amelia! I must see the person alone. Go you now; I will follow you."

Her gesture was peremptory, and Emily obeyed it, following the boy to the carriage. She saw a man wrapped closely in a cloak leaning against one of the pillars; but took no particular notice of him, for she could not see his face. She went on quickly, unconscious that she was betrayed into a trap.

The man followed her at a distance. As he saw her step into Binatelli's carriage, he gave a low whistle, as if he scented some plot. Then he hastily beckoned to a cabman, whispered to him, got into the vehicle and closed the door and windows.

She drove away, leaving long to Emily, who had never before been at the signora's house. She could not help fancying the cabman had mistaken his direction, and was about to call to him to inquire, when the carriage suddenly stopped.

Some one fumbled at the handle of the door, and pulled it open. A man stepped in, took the seat opposite her, and pulled the door to behind him.

Emily was dreadfully frightened. She knocked loudly on the glass.

"The man caught by the wrist. 'That will do you no good!' he whispered.

"Who are you, sir?" gasped the terrified girl.

"You will know me quite well when you see me."

The voice was rough, and evidently disguised.

"Leave the carriage this moment!" cried the girl, endeavoring to assume a tone of command.

"Excuse me; I have as much right here as you."

"It is Madame Binatelli's carriage."

"I am aware of that; as I am here by her invitation."

"You—a stranger?"

"I know her better than you do!"

"You are going to her house?"

"Not exactly; this is not the way to it."

Emily's alarm increased. Again she tried to open the door.

"No more of that, Miss Watts. You

might hurt yourself, if the door opened too suddenly. You see, we are going very fast."

"Oh, sir, whoever you are, leave me! I have done you no harm. Madame Binatelli will be very angry indeed!"

"I am not afraid of her anger, especially as she knew I should be here!"

"She knew it?"

"Perfectly well. She sent you out alone for that purpose."

"It is false, sir?"

"You will find it true, my dear. If you want to know more, let me tell you that Binatelli wants to be rid of you."

"Rid of me?"

"Just so; you are in her way. She is afraid you have charmed her lover."

"Her lover!" repeated the poor girl, whose brain began to reel.

"The gentleman of the private-box! He is a lover of months' standing. You are much younger and handsomer than the Italian lady. She saw how much her admirer fancied you; she saw him leave his box: doubtless to go to your rooms and wait for you."

With a throb of anguish, Emily thought of the card and cheque she had left in the signora's hands. Could it be possible she had been betrayed?

"She sent you out of the way, and commissioned me to take charge of you!"

"And who are you, sir?"

"An old friend, who means to be your husband."

The last threat brought the girl's affright to the point of desperation. Dashing in the glass of the window, she put her face to the opening, and uttered shriek after shriek for help.

A voice was heard in the road, and the roll of carriage wheels. Again rung out the girl's cries, in spite of the efforts of her captor to stop her.

"Hold the horses, man!" cried a voice, that of a cabman by his cockney accent.

The carriage was brought to a halt. The door was flung open, and Emily threw herself out with such eagerness that she fell prostrate on the ground.

"Bring the lantern, coachman!" cried the cabman.

"Put out the light!" said the abductor.

"We do not want it here!"

The frightened girl, trying to raise herself from the ground, renewed her entreaties for help.

"Let her alone!" said her late companion.

"She belongs to me, and is touched in the head. I was only taking her to a place of safety."

"Oh, sir, as you are a gentleman," implored the girl, "do not listen to him! I do not even know who this man is. I came from the theater in Madame Binatelli's carriage, and was going to her house. He stopped the carriage and was taking me somewhere else. Save me from him! Take me home; back to my lodgings; only let me be safe with my child!"

Her deliverer made no reply, but offered his arm, to which she clung convulsively.

"You had best not interfere, sir," said the abductor, threateningly. "I will not stand this. Let go the lady!"

He strove to separate them. Suddenly the unknown who had stopped the carriage leaned toward him, and whispered a few words in his ear.

He started back in evident surprise.

"Now, Miss Watts," whispered the gentleman on whose arm she leaned, "you had better get into the carriage again—and drive to Madame Binatelli's. It is not so far off as you think. See well expect to see you."

"But that man—he will follow me."

"He will not trouble you again. Please to get in."

Emily stepped into the carriage. The door was closed. She saw from the window that it was turned to go in a contrary direction, and that one shadowy figure was left standing in the road. One of the two men was with her then. How ardently she wished herself back in her little room, or under the shelter of her father's roof!

It was not more than a quarter of an hour, though it seemed much longer, when the carriage stopped in front of a lighted house of large size. It was a respectable lodging-house in Regent street overlooking Piccadilly circus, much frequented by the artists of the opera and St. James' theater.

The front of the house was ablaze with gas-light.

Emily's courage returned at once. The coachman opened the door and civilly requested her to alight.

She did not see the gentleman who had saved her from the hands of her ruffian captor.

"You had best go

you my word, in six months you shall be the lady of the manor."

"I do not believe a word you say."

"If I prove my power to do all I promise, will you marry me?"

"When?"

"To-morrow, as soon as possible."

The girl looked at him and shuddered.

"No. Hugh Rawd, I never would marry you. I should be too miserable."

"Not to place your boy among the nobles of the land?"

"Not even for that; though I would give my life to do it! I am afraid of you; I abhor you; how could I live as your wife?"

"Take care, madam, how you talk to me in this way! So—perhaps you are in love with this man; but this Mr. Marlitt, perhaps?"

"No; I dislike him; I never want to see him again!" cried the girl, passionately.

"He is in love with you; he came to London more on your account than Binatelli's. That is why she hated you."

"I will run away from them all; I will go back to my father! He will take care of me."

"Into the lion's mouth! Mr. Marlitt lives at Broadhurst!"

"But he can not molest me there!"

"No, he can not for he is going to marry the lady who is mistress there, and she would protect you. But I shall follow you!"

"You dare not! I have heard that you and Mr. Marlitt have quarreled. He will not suffer you there."

Hugh scowled at her.

"Perhaps Mr. Albert Morell may be a more favored sister? But beware, madam! I have a hold on him that may touch his life!"

He has never killed any one! Can you say as much, Mr. Hugh?"

"I can get him transported, at any rate. You shall never marry him!"

"I do not want to marry anybody; you last of all! Now you have my answer. Leave this room; or I will leave it."

"I shall take you with me, Emily."

"You will leave me, sir, and at once! I am not afraid of you; but I will not be molested! Begone this moment!"

The villain stood still. His face expressed savage determination. Emily caught up her shawl, and went to the mirror, which was still ajar. Through the narrow aperture she saw a passage behind him.

"Where does this lead?" she asked, resolutely.

"You can not get out that way! It leads down stairs; through the servants' chambers."

He strode after her, and pushed the mirror frame into its place in the wall.

Emily watched her opportunity, darted across the room, and before he could intercept her, had unlocked the door leading into the corridor, and thrown it open.

"Now, sir, begone!" she reiterated.

"With you, my charmer!" he cried, flinging his arm around her, and trying to stop her mouth with the other hand. She struggled violently; but he drew her forcibly down the corridor, nearly to the head of the broad stairway, before she had time to utter a word. In the dim light she could not see whether he was carrying her.

Dashing away his hand from her mouth, she screamed loudly for help. He stuffed a handkerchief to her mouth, and dragged her on.

Rapid steps were heard coming up the stairs; and the next instant a powerful arm hauled Hugh backward, while its owner tore the girl from his grasp.

"Oh, Mr. Marlitt!" exclaimed the girl, "he came into my room by a secret door. Madame Binatelli sent him again!"

"This room, child; go in here!" replied the gentleman, throwing open another door at the head of the stairs. "You see it is empty. You will be safe here. Go in; I will deal with this ruffian!"

Emily obeyed him at once, locking the door and bolting it after her.

"Now, sir, you must accede to me for your unexpected return. How came you here, when you agreed to stay out of the country?"

"I was tired of foreign tongues and faces; that is all."

"Do you know that you risk an arrest, and the gibbet, by being here?"

"If I hang, somebody will hang with me!" muttered the ruffian.

"You can implicate nobody; you have not a shred to prove your words! If you cross my path again, I will let you play your game out. Now you must begone, and not dare to show your face to any one who ever knew you."

"There are two words to that!"

"Then I must make it necessary for you, by sending a description of you to Scotland Yard as the murderer of two men in Wales," said the other, savagely.

"I will turn State's evidence!"

"Against whom? You can not prove that I employed you in any thing."

The man looked at Marlitt, and saw that he was in earnest. He muttered something of "ingratitude," and having no money—"Here is a cheque for a hundred pounds!"—and Marlitt drew out the one Emily had returned to him. "You can travel on this till my marriage, and then I will send you an allowance, payable as long as you stay abroad. You must go to Australia."

"That is something reasonable," was the reply.

"You can take your choice between my offer and immediate arrest. I shall not let you leave the hotel, unless you promise to leave England before the next noon."

"I have no wish to stay here, sir. If I can not have the girl I love—"

"She would marry a Hotentot sooner! If you are jealous of me, I promise you to leave her alone. I have other projects."

"I know you have," muttered the man, in an undertone; "and one of these days I will dish them for you."

"Will you agree to what I require of you? Will you go to Australia?"

"I have no choice. I will leave this cursed country again; for it would not do to be tried for my life before I have the means of defense. Give me the money."

"No—I can not trust you. You may sleep here in my room. In the morning I will go to the docks with you, and see you off in the first outward-bound vessel. I will give you the money in parting from you."

Hugh Rawd was obliged to submit. He silently followed his late employer to his apartments.

On Albert Morell's next visit, he was accepted by the disappointed debutante. The marriage took place some time after her return to her father's house. The young pair returned to London, where Emily sung in small concerts, and procured private pupils.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 105.)

Saturday Journal

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The SATURDAY JOURNAL is sold by all Newsdealers in the United States and in the Canadian Dominion. Parties unable to obtain it from a newsdealer, or those preferring to have the paper sent direct, by mail, from the publication office, are supplied at the following rates:

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Our Arm-Chair.

Less than Letter Rates.—As there appears to be great misapprehension of the Postal Laws regarding what matter can pass at less than "letter rates," we give the following as some of the specifications:

A monthly journal, not exceeding four ounces in weight, can only pass through the mails to subscribers at a postage of three cents per quarter, in advance.

One or more newspapers may be inclosed in the same package and sent by mail at the rate of two cents for each four ounces, or fraction thereof.

Publishers of newspapers can not send specimen copies of their papers to postmasters and others without prepayment of postage thereon.

Newsdealers may pay the postage on their packages of newspapers and periodicals as received, at the same rate that actual subscribers thereto pay quarterly in advance. If he receives a package of thirteen newspapers he is required to pay only five cents; if less or more than that number he pays at the same proportionate rates.

A subscriber receiving a newspaper for one month must pay either transient rates or for the whole quarter in advance.

Publishers may inclose in their publication to regular subscribers the bills for subscription without additional charge for postage, and may write or print upon their regular publications or upon the wrappers thereof, the name and address of the subscriber thereto, and the date when the subscription will expire, but any other inclosure in addition in writing or in print will subject the same to letter rates of postage.

All newspapers sent by publishers to those who are not regular subscribers must be prepaid at transient rates, two cents for each four ounces or fraction thereof.

Publications borrowing the name and having the form and some of the characteristics of a newspaper, but depending on their advertisements for support, can not be classed with regular newspapers in regard to postage, but must be treated as miscellaneous printed matter, and be prepaid at the mailing office.

When unmailable articles reach a post-office with less than letter rates of postage prepaid thereon, it is the duty of the postmaster to collect the postage due before delivery thereof.

A package of circulars—the circulars having no address thereon—may be mailed to one address at the rate of two cents for each four ounces or fraction thereof.

If newspapers be brought by express and deposited in a post-office for delivery, the postmaster should collect the same postage as though received by mail.

Book manuscript and corrected proofs passing between authors and publishers may pass at the rate of printed matter (2 cents for four ounces, or fraction thereof), but manuscript for newspapers, magazines, periodicals, etc., or any matter wholly or partly in writing, except as above-mentioned, is subject to letter postage.

Pamphlets, paper-covered novels and similar publications, are to be rated at two cents for each four ounces, or fraction thereof, prepaid by stamps, except when issued regularly at stated intervals, at least as often as quarterly, in which case they are to be classed as periodicals, and rated accordingly.

One cent per ounce is not the legal rate of postage on any class of mailable matter. Books are subject to postage at the rate of four cents for each four ounces, or fraction thereof. Packages so sealed as to prevent an examination of the contents must be charged letter postage, no matter what might be their contents.

Transient matter weighing less than four ounces, can not pass through the mails at less than two cents, prepaid by stamps.

When newspapers, other than weeklies, to regular subscribers in the country, are deposited in an office for delivery, they must be properly addressed and prepaid at drop rates, one cent each.

If weekly newspapers are delivered by letter-carriers, they are chargeable with postage at the rate of five cents per quarter, payable quarterly, or yearly in advance; but if delivered at the post-office, no charge will be made.

A Lesson for Parents.—The number of suicides committed by young persons—frequently by mere children—is exciting discussion and enlisting inquiry. It is conceded that a deep cause underlies this vast and desperate resort to self-destruction. This cause is, in general terms, indicated in the expression, "false education," but more specifically, in the want of proper mental and moral development.

In the young, any great mental excitement is an evil. Their tender minds are not yet adapted to the strain, and it is fair to assume that thousands of young persons are yearly injured for life by shocks to their nervous and mental systems. How many a bright boy or spirited girl becomes the stupid, commonplace man or woman, every observant person knows. The cause lies in some terrible overstrain—a common form of which is indicated in this paragraph by a leading journalist.

"The American boy eats his share of his father's knowledge from the time he can sit at table. Tammany Rings, murders, social evils, are no mysteries to him; they fill his ears at every meal and his eyes whenever he looks into a paper. There is usually no attempt to hide from him any depth of human degradation or vice. Even worse than this: the troubles of the family—debts, struggles, disagreements—are laid upon his little shoulders with cruel carelessness, at an age when he should not know there was such a thing as trouble in the world."

This laying upon young hearts the heavy burden of family sorrows and cares is very cruel, and, even more than the parent can guess, affects the child.

Our homes are not bright and cheerful enough; our parents exact too much labor and effort from their children; our schools force the young minds too fast; our nights are spent in amusements instead of in healthy sleep; our food is too exciting and stimulative; and so, altogether, American boys and girls are developed into a manhood or womanhood which is but the prelude to unhappiness and ill-health.

The remedy is open to each and all. Lead more quiet lives; live in more harmonious home relations; take time for all things; be less anxious for wealth and position and more anxious for health and happiness.

THE CRY OF WOMANHOOD.

BY REV. T. DE WITT TALMAGE.

I HEAR from all this land the wail of womanhood. Man has nothing to answer to that wail but latitudes. He says she is an angel. She is not. She knows she is not. She is a human being, who gets hungry when she has no food, and cold when she has no fire. Give her no more flatteries: give her justice!

There are thirty-five thousand sewing-girls in New York and Brooklyn. Across the darkness of this night I hear their death-groan. It is not such a cry as comes from those who are suddenly hurled out of life, but a slow, grinding, horrible wasting away. Gather them before you and look into their faces, pinched, ghastly, hunger-struck! Look at their fingers, needle-picked and blood-tipped! See that premature stoop in the shoulders! Hear that dry, hacking, merciless cough!

At a large meeting of these women, held in a hall in Philadelphia, grand speeches were delivered, but a needle-woman took the stand, threw aside her faded shawl, and, with her shriveled arm, hurled a very thunderbolt of eloquence, speaking out of the horrors of her own experience.

Stand at the corner of a street in New York at half-past five or six in the morning, as the women go to their work. Many of them had no breakfast except the crumbs that were left over from the night before, or a crust they chew on their way through the street. Here they come! The working girls of New York and Brooklyn! These engaged in bead-work, these in flower-making, in millinery, enameling, cigar-making, book-binding, labeling, feather-picking, print-coloring, paper-box making, but, most overworked of all, and least compensated, the sewing-women. Why do they not take the city cars on their way up? They can not afford the five cents! If, concluding to deny herself something else, she gets into a car, give her a seat! You want to see how Latimer and Ridley appeared in the fire: look at that woman and behold a more terrible martyrdom, a hotter fire, a more agonizing death! Ask that woman how much she gets for her work, and she will tell you six cents for making coarse shirts, and finds her own thread!

Last Sabbath night, in the vestibule of my church, after service, a woman fell in convulsions. The doctor said she needed medicine not so much as something to eat. As she began to revive in her delirium, she said, gaspingly: "Eight cents! Eight cents! Eight cents! I wish I could get it done! I am so tired! I wish I could get some sleep, but I must get it done! Eight cents! Eight cents!" We found afterward that she was making garments for eight cents apiece, and that she could make but three of them in a day! Hear it, men and women who have comfortable homes!

Some of the worst villains in the city are the employers of these women. They beat them down to the last penny, and they cheat them out of that. The woman must deposit a dollar or two before she gets the garments to work on. When the work is done it is sharply inspected, the most insignificant flaws picked out, and the wages refused, and sometimes the dollar deposited not given back. The Women's Protective Union reports a case where one of these poor souls, finding a place where she could get more wages, resolved to change employers, and went to get her pay for work done. The employer says: "I hear you are going to leave me?" "Yes," she said, "and I have come to get what you owe me." He made no answer. She said: "Are you not going to pay me?" "Yes," he said, "I will pay you," and he kicked her down the stairs!

How are these evils to be eradicated? What have you to answer, you who sell coats, and have shoes made, and contract for the Southern and Western markets? What help is there, what panacea, what redemption? Some say: "Give women the ballot." What effect such ballot might have on other questions I am not here to discuss; but what would be the effect of female suffrage upon woman's wages? I do not believe that woman will ever get justice by woman's ballot.

Indeed, women oppress women as much as men do. Do not women, as much as men, beat down to the lowest figure the woman who sews for them? Are not women as sharp as men on washerwomen, and milliners, and mantuamakers? If a woman asks a dollar for her work, does not her female employer ask her if she will not take ninety cents? You say, "Only ten cents difference to the last," but that is something difference between heaven and hell. Women often have less commiseration for women than men. If a woman steps aside from the path of virtue, man may forgive—woman never! Woman will never get justice done her from woman's ballot.

Neither will she get it from man's ballot. How, then? God will rise up for her. God has more resources than we know of. The flaming sword that hung at Eden's gate when woman was driven out will cleave with its terrible edge her oppressors.

But there is something for our women to do. Let our young people prepare to excel in spheres of work, and they will be able, after a while, to get larger wages. If it be shown that a woman can, in a store, sell more goods in a year than a man, she will soon be able not only to ask but to demand more wages, and to demand them successfully. Unskilled and incompetent labor must take what is given; skilled and competent labor will eventually make its own standard. Admitting that the law of supply and demand regulates these things, I contend that the demand for skilled labor is very great, and the supply very small.

Start with the idea that work is honorable, and that you can do some one thing better than any one else. Resolve that, God helping, you will take care of yourself. If you are, after a while, called into another relation, you will all the better be qualified for it by your spirit of self-reliance; or if you are called to stay as you are, you can be happy and self-supporting.—From "The Abominations of Modern Society."

Foolscap Papers.

Farmerial.

I LIKE farmers. I would be an honest old farmer myself, but I singularly fall short in some of the requirements—whether it is in the farming part or the honest part I never could rightly determine. I like to have my agricultural friends stop and take dinner with me when they come to town, but I don't like for them to press me to take a nice ham or a fat turkey; so I generally take them without pressing much.

I take every opportunity I can get to give them valuable opinions, for which I would not take money, but I might be absolutely forced to accept chickens under one year of age, and eggs and butter still more youthful. As the planting season is round again, I shall proceed to offer a little more advice to whom it may concern anybody, and hope sincerely that farmers will not feel compelled to bring me no presents.

Plant your corn early in January: this will give you—providing you have no bad luck—roasting ears in March and April, and you can have your corn all in May.

The easiest way to get stamps out of your fields is to let them rot out. If anybody knows an easier I would like to hear from him.

Turnips cooked with cabbage lies very easy on a man's conscience.

If the extraordinary rush of work to be done on your farm keeps you most of the time in town at a saloon, be careful and not overwork yourself.

Always employ Jaybirds to pick your cherries for you.

Seven-up is a noble agricultural pastime when spades is trumps.

If you could hoe your corn in the winter it would be much nicer. The saddest sight is to see a farmer's boy on a hot summer day hoeing corn and wishing he could take his hoeing in out of the sun, with his eye on supper time.

Break your horses and your flax about the same time.

Keep a sheep's eye on your flocks.

I have always thought the easiest work on a farm would be to sleep in the fence corner while every thing would be going on all right—along with the world in its revolution.

Plant your dried apple and dried peach trees where the sun will have full sweep at them.

In cutting your oats with a cradle be sure that you take the baby out of it first.

In sowing wheat with a needle and thread, press your field with a flat iron.

In draining, first take the rims off your tiles and begin by first putting one on the head of the stream.

Set your hens on a cushioned chair, and don't let them come off until they have had a full set.

Crows do not affect to be much frightened at their second-cousins, scare-crows. Allow me to suggest an idea for their complete extermination. In the center of your field dig a hole ten feet deep and eight feet square: over this lay twigs and branches, with a light covering of earth; put a peck of corn in this, then go to sawing wood and looking serious as if you thought nothing was up so the crows will not be suspicious; the whole flock will then light on this trap, and the consequence will be that it will tumble in with them. Of course the crows, being without hands, can not climb up the sides of the pit, and there you will have them; if you won't, what will you have? Even elephants are caught in this manner. Or, build a wall around your farm so high they can't fly over it.

Sprout your onions before putting them in their beds; sprout your boys before putting them in theirs.

In taping your ash-barrels to make maple sugar, don't bore clear to the heart of the barrel, for you will "spile" it.

Shear your geese about the first of June. Beets are slow coming up, but I find them extremely fast in going down.

Leave a great many shade trees in your fields; your boys will work the faster to get to them.

The best wheat to plant is the kind which brings four dollars a bushel, if you know what kind that is; and the best chickens are those which are fried.

Probably the best reaping machine you can have on a farm is the SATURDAY JOURNAL; it sweeps every thing before it.

Go to bed early, say about one o'clock in the afternoon.

It is the cheapest to shell your corn in a coffee-mill.

Canary seed should be put in the ground in June when it is warm. Put a cage over each seed bed, when the canary jumps up, it may fly off.

If there are any barren, bald places on your land, make a daily application of somebody's hair restorative.

In plowing, wear kid gloves and patent leather shoes, unless you are extravagant and want something better.

Send your sheaves to a bookbinder.

Spanish needles and thistles are about the easiest things you can cultivate on your farm. True, they are not so very profitable, but they have the charm of being prolific. Protect the former like a Spaniard, and the latter like a true Scotchman.

No temperate farmer will tolerate bars on his farm. Brandy he might keep in his cellar; it is extremely nice for puddings—you take a bite of the pudding and a mouthful of the brandy.

If you find that forty-nine dogs are not enough on your farm, get more.

Don't raise much "kitchen sass" unless your wife is late with the dinner.

The only one objection I have to the agreeable occupation of farming is that there is too much healthful exercise in it. I might consent to the three hour system, but under no consideration will I ever buy a farm until they invent a machine that will do all the work and fan me while I'm asleep.

Respectfully submitted,

WASHINGTON WHITEHORN,
Non-commissioner of Agriculture.

THE SATURDAY JOURNAL.—We have received from the publishers, BRADLEY AND COMPANY, 98 William street, New York, the current numbers of this literary journal. The SATURDAY JOURNAL is a first-class literary paper, and has among its contributors some of the best writers of fiction in America. Its several departments are ably sustained, and we have no hesitation in recommending it to the notice of our readers. Its tales and short stories are full of interest and ably sustain the reputation already acquired by the JOURNAL.—Dunville (Ontario) Gazette.

Readers and Contributors.

TO CORRESPONDENTS AND AUTHORS.—No MSS. received that are not fully prepaid in postage.—No MSS. preserved for future orders.—Unavailable MSS. promptly returned, only where stamps accompany the inclosures, for such returns.—Block MSS. postage is two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof, but must be marked Book MSS., and be sealed in wrappers with open end, in order to pass the mails at "book rates."—No correspondence of any nature is permissible in a package marked as "Book MSS."—MSS. which are imperfect are not used or wanted. In all cases our choice rests first upon merit or fitness, second, upon easiness of MSS. as to copy, third, length. Of two MSS. of equal merit we always prefer the shorter.—Never write on both sides of a sheet. Use Commercial Note size paper as most convenient to editor and compositor, tearing off each page as it is wanted, and carefully giving its folio or page number.—A rejection by no means implies a want of merit. Many MSS. unavailable to us are well worthy of use.—All experienced and popular writers will find an ever ready to give their efficacy, every attention.—Correspondents must look to this column for all information in regard to contributions. We can not write letters except in special cases.

We will try and find room for contributions, viz.: "Deserted," "Guardian Shadows," "Ned's Adventure," "Will's Proposal," "The Drunken Engineer," "Songs of Philosophy," "An Echo," "Notes by the Way," "Extra's Message."

But shall have to place on the unavailable list the following: "Artificials," "A Waterfall," "Irene," "The Lover's Plot," "The Hero's Picnic," "Revenge Filled," "To-morrow, Eve," "Folled," "The Three poems by Gerard S.," "Shake Hands," "A Thrilling Adventure," "Anne vs. Niece," "Joe's Lament," "Five Years Ago," "Roxton's Missings," "Very Obedient," "Prying Boarding-housekeeper," "My Story," "The Grave," "Ghost in Livingston's Woods," "To a Dead Comrade."

MS. "Folled" is good enough for us, but we have no room for it. Have an overstock of that kind of matter. Send it to some other weekly.

ACTING. Romances of French, English or German extraction are not desirable. We prefer that our story authors should stick to the field of American Society and people.

CONSTANT READER. Answered, about removing a mole from the face, in this issue.

W. B. C. The papers from 41 to 49 will cost you 54 cents.

ALVO E. The numbers named will cost you 96 cents.

BLAIR. You are not too old, but it would doubtless be far better for you to learn a good trade. Actors are usually very poorly paid and are not sure of employ.

CHAR. VAN T. England certainly has the advantage of us on the sea, but her strength and ours are weak. She has ample facilities for constructing ships; we have few shipyards and very little good timber, ready for such work, for she works we have as good as the world can produce.

ADVENTURE. The popular idea that a priest claims to grant pardon for sins or crimes, is erroneous. All the priest can do, after confession, is to intercede, by prayer, with God, for forgiveness. The command of the church not to eat meat during Lent is binding only on those who accept the church's authority to make such ordinances.

DE SORO. The young lady can sue for breach of promise against a minor, by indirectness through his guardian or parent. Or, she can wait until majority and then sue, but the latter is a minor case, and entered—nominally called "taking the benefit of the baby act"—which is always a stigma.

SAM. "Ned Hazel, the Boy Trapper," runs through numbers 46 to 58, inclusive.

The MS. by Hattie H. Howitt is returned to us from Iowa City, as not called for.

F. L. A. A. Wild Nathan will cost you 30cts.; Ned Hazel 40cts.; Blackfoot Queen 40cts. The cholera probably will be prevalent this year.

FRANKLIN. Our hundred of Bradleys' Dime Novels will cost you \$6.50; the SATURDAY JOURNAL from No. 1 to 75 will be \$4.05. California Joe was a real character, well known in the Army of the Potomac, in Benham's corps of sharpshooters. He is the hero of the AMERICAN TALES, (published by Bradley & Co.) "California Joe." Parents have a right to compel their children to leave their trades.

REMNANTS.

BY H. A. DARTLEY.

There's a little brown dress in the closet,
There are bonnets and things laid away;
There's a wee little golden brown ringle,
To remind us of our little May.
There's a sweet little face in the framework—
A picture of one long passed by;
It's a face that belongs to her Maker,
Who lives far beyond the bright sky.

There's a wee pair of shoes in the pantry,
With the two little toes copper-tipped;
Which our sweet little May had walked in,
In which our sweet little May had skipped.
There's a sweet little voice that we miss, too,
Which we all loved so dear to hear chat;
There's a little low chair in the corner,
In which our sweet little May often sat.

There are little toys up on the mantle;
There's a quaint little crib laid aside;
There's a little roscabash in the garden
That belonged to the one that has died.
There's a little grave down in the churchyard,
With a little stone slab at its head;
There's an evergreen wreath on the headstone,
To remind us of one that is dead.

Cecil's Deceit:

THE DIAMOND LEGACY.

BY MRS. JENNIE D. BURTON.

AUTHOR OF "ADRIA, THE ADVENTURER," OR, THE MYSTERY OF KILLISNOCK GRANGE," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE POWER OF GUILTY LOVE.

A WEEK, marked by only commonplace events went by at Frampton Place. Olive had quite recovered from the effects of her night's exposure, and Sophie Darnley, who remained a few days, had taken her departure.

The repairs upon the main body of the house were quite completed; upholsterers from the city had arrived and were engaged in fitting the rooms with elegant modern furnishings.

There was still much to be done, a whole wing untouched, but a number of the workmen had been dismissed and a short reprieve granted to the rest.

Dick Holstead—good son that he was—took advantage of the time to pay a welcome visit to his mother. Before he went, he had been made acquainted with the fact, not yet announced without the immediate family, of Olive's engagement to Victor D'Arno.

Whatever he may have felt of bitter disappointment at this consummation, what ever of regret over the sudden blinding of a bright hope he had cherished, or satisfaction that his secret had not been exposed and subjected to her refusal, he gave no outward evidence. He was a strong, honest man, and suffered with the intensity of his whole nature. The short absence from Frampton Place, and consequently from Olive, together with the certainty of his mother's sympathy, were doubly welcome, coming coincident as they did.

It was at this time that Mr. Chantry made his appearance, and delivered into Cecil's hands the famed Collingsbrooke diamonds. They were large, lustrous stones, of great value, uniquely set in old-fashioned mountings.

"They must be reset," said Mr. Frampton; "and you shall wear them at Olive's birthday fête, Eve. My wife must represent the blue blood she inherits with due honor."

Cecil smiled inscrutably, but agreeing with him, it was decided that the gems should be sent to the city at an early day.

Olive's birthday, regularly celebrated, was on this occasion to be fraught with an additional interest—the announcement of her own and Victor's betrothal.

The latter had urged his suit to Mr. Frampton with all of a lover's impetuosity with this gratifying result. Whatever Mr. Frampton's own scruples might have been in thus giving up the child who occupied a place in his affections truly as if she had been his own, his faith in his wife was sufficient to overrule his objections to resigning her to a comparative stranger.

The references D'Arno produced seemed amply satisfactory, and it was understood, though not yet definitely agreed upon, that there should be no long delay to try the patience of the young people.

Cecil remained apparently quiescent while the man who had been so much to her, for whom her whole soul yearned even now, pursued his intent. But the quietest surface sometimes conceals a restless underflow; and the stream is glassy smooth, though resistless strong, above the cataract.

These weeks of constant intercourse in the country house where all were thrown together unrestrainedly, had served to show her how futile was the strength of will she had prided herself upon; how slender was the bond connecting her with the new life she had falsely entered upon.

Victor came upon her suddenly, one morning, as she walked alone in the grounds. She had passed to avoid him of late, and his own self-pride tempted him—beyond his better judgment, perhaps—to meet her in the old tender way.

"Cecil," he said, drawing her hand within his arm and timing his pace to suit hers, "you certainly can not blame me for the course I have taken. And while it is so, you must not deny me the happiness which you of all women only can give me. Try as you will, you can not banish me from your heart; if I did not know that, I might not be willing to wait."

She caught at his implied meaning breathlessly.

"To wait, Victor! For what?"

"Do you suppose that I could see you, Cecil, more radiant than when our changing fortunes were upon your freshness, yet left you ever beautiful in my sight, be thrown with you day after day, and not remember your old true devotion—our happiness? I seem to have buried all the bitterness of our past in remembrances of its sweets. Do you think I can look back then, and while there is a chance of regaining the Paradise I once lost, put the hope of it out of my thoughts?"

"What do you mean, Victor? You speak in riddles!"

"I mean that our separation shall not be for all time, Cecil—that the obstacles existing now shall be swept away sooner or later, and until that time comes we will not deprive ourselves of the joy the knowledge may bring us."

"It can be," she half questioned, half asserted. "Have you guessed my thoughts?"

"What are they?"

"You asked me once if I would give up my present position to take up our wandering life again. I thought I had trampled down woman's dearest weakness, that of loving; and I told you that nothing could

influence me to go back to it and you. But now, Victor, one word from you is enough to make me willingly your slave, if you will have it so."

"No, not that, Cecil! Mine with the equality which unselfish love demands, as I am yours. It will not be so hard to be patient, now that we have this understanding, will it?"

"Why do you counsel patience? Why not create the sunshine of the present from what you picture so glowingly for our future?"

"Your husband is scarcely an old man yet, and he may live for years; but, in the common course of nature, we will both survive him long enough. And I—"

"If it is your proposition to wait the decrease of my husband, you have changed greatly since you wooed me of old. Why do you mock me with bright visions, if only to obscure them by such a paltry suggestion?"

"You did not hear me out. I shall never ask you to share such a life as we once led. Let me follow my plans, gain possession of Olive's fortune, and then, Cecil, there will be no question of our future together."

"Olive! Do you mean that you will not give her up for me?"

"That would be folly. Remember, she is only my stepping-stone to ease and happiness, as Hugh Frampton must be yours."

"Oh, Victor, if there is to be any thing of the old ties between us, let us put away selfish considerations from the first."

"Ah, but then we could not avoid the old miseries."

"I have the Collingsbrooke diamonds, in themselves a fortune. We need never come to want."

"No, Cecil; I may revoke my word and claim some of that submission you tendered a moment ago. You must be guided by me in this, and be content, knowing the revival stronger than ever of my devotion to you."

"But to think of her as your wife! To know that she will receive the caresses which should be mine only! I frighten myself with the thoughts which the depths of my hatred for her suggest when that possibility thrusts itself before me."

"Though my wife she will not have my love, Cecil. If you were free now it might be otherwise, but while you are willing to break your bonds for my sake, you must endure as much as I have borne in the weeks past. Do you think I have had no pangs when I witnessed your tenderness to your fond old husband? But I knew you truly as you know yourself, and had no fear of the issue."

"We must have wealth enough to insure our future from the chances of evil befalling, and for this end I will pursue my settled plans. With Olive's fortune and your marriage portion converted into ready money, you can afford to keep the diamonds as a souvenir of this time. Let me hear you say that you are satisfied, Cecil!"

"You are giving me the sorest test of woman's love, Victor; but for your sake and my own I will bear it through. I can do so now."

A little more was said and then they parted. Cecil lingered still in the grounds, too full of the conscious unrest of guilty happiness to venture yet to face those she was planning with him to wrong.

So occupied was she in her own thoughts that she did not observe the approach of another until the shadow fell athwart her path. She looked up then and started back in superstitious terror. For a second she thought that the ghost of Eve Collingsbrooke stood before her, so pitiful was the resemblance between that wasted, somber-clad figure and the gentle mistress she had served.

Then, before a word had been spoken, she grappled with and conquered her momentary fear, losing it in another no less, knowing this to be Eve Collingsbrooke, alive.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE UNWELCOME GUEST.

Eve was the first to break the silence between them.

"It is really you, Cecil," said she. "I knew it must be so, but almost hoped for disappointment, because I did not wish to believe it of you. Yet I am glad that you too escaped! You thought me dead, did you not?"

"Yes; you must know that I did," Cecil replied. "Otherwise, I would have sought you out at once."

Eve looked at her doubtfully.

"Would you? Would you have relinquished the advantage which my supposed death afforded you? You see, I know how you have wronged me!"

"I never meant to wrong you," Cecil declared, earnestly, wondering inwardly how much of her deception the other really knew. "Times have greatly changed for me since we were together last."

"Yes, I know. You are Mrs. Frampton now, the wife of the man who was to have been my husband. I know how you have deceived him, and of the other benefit you have derived from the usurpation of my name."

Cecil's doubt settled into certainty now. There was no use trying to blind Eve by a fresh deceit, as it had been in her mind to do. After all, it would have been difficult to have done so, and yet avert the exposure she feared. Her object now was to keep the presence of the other from being known by the household.

"Come this way where we can speak unmolested," she said, leading the way down an obscure path at the further end of which was a neglected arbor, overgrown with matted vines. She entered this, and Eve, following with painful, dragging steps, sunk wearily upon the rude bench within.

"I never meant to wrong you," Cecil repeated. "I thought you were dead, and I was alone, friendless, unprotected. It seemed so easy to secure loving care and a home; maybe you have known what it is to be without them since. If you have you can not blame me much, when I thought I was harming no one. I never would have done it had I known you were alive."

"You should not have deceived Mr. Frampton. What do you suppose I have come here for?"

"Not to betray me, don't say that! He loves me, and you would give him bitter grief without bringing good to yourself."

She knew the truth of what she said—and shuddered at thought of the remorseless, unforgiving spirit such an exposure would be sure to arouse in Hugh Frampton.

"Perhaps so," Eve spoke slowly and with effort. "I meant to have told him the truth; but I believe you, and am tempted to leave such retribution as your act deserves

find you in its own good time. Give me only what is mine, and you shall be free from fear or molestation from me."

"And that is?" questioned Cecil.

"The Collingsbrooke diamonds, which have descended rightfully to me. I ask no restitution for what would have been mine had no fate interposed to thwart those plans of which you have reaped the benefit."

"Treachery of diamonds will secure me comfortable independence, and that is all I ask or wish."

Cecil passed her hands slowly one above the other as she thought. Left to herself she would gladly have complied with Eve's demand, and thus have gained security to herself. But how could she account for the disappearance of the gems to her husband, at this time, too, of all others, when she knew they would be almost immediately missed? She formed one quick resolve, to gain time, and for this purpose prevaricated to Eve.

"The diamonds are not here," she said. "I have sent them to the city to be reset. My husband expects me to wear them at a party to be given more than a week from this, and I dare not be without them then. You shall have them after that."

Eve scarcely seemed to be heeding. She roused herself to catch at the last words.

"After a week; ah, yes! the diamonds. I must have them, you know, for they are mine. It is very hard to be poor and in want, and those little glittering stones are all I shall have to keep me from poverty."

She was speaking in a rambling, half-incoherent manner. Cecil, looking at her with startled fixedness, saw that her cheeks were stained now by a hectic flush, and her weary eyes had grown strangely bright.

"You are ill, I fear," she said, touching her finger upon the other's rapid pulse. "Here is money—not much, but enough! Go back to the village and get suitable lodgings, medical attendance if necessary, and I will come to you when I can give you the jewels."

"I never could get there," replied Eve. "I fear you are right; I feel so strangely. I must rest awhile before I attempt to return."

Cecil was thoroughly alarmed now. She saw that Eve was really too ill to attempt the walk back to the village, while it was most essential that her presence there should not be discovered. She felt that she dared not risk introducing her into the household on any false representation—the peril was too imminent to herself. At the same time something must be done for her former kind mistress.

Mr. Frampton, she knew, had been busy all the morning in the library over his private correspondence, and was most likely still occupied there. It was nearing noon now, and the servants would be all busy in their particular departments. She felt that she must venture taking Eve within, trusting that nourishment and rest might restore her to strength sufficient for her return.

She hoped, if she could escape Olive's observation, to gain her own room unnoticed, with her companion. Chance seemed to favor her. She heard the murmur of distant voices, and through the foliage caught the glimmer of Olive's light dress as she went down the avenue, Victor by her side.

"Come with me," she said, speaking hurriedly. "You shall go in and rest. You see I trust you fully; for Heaven's sake, be watchful, that you don't betray the confidence I place in you. Come!"

Eve rose, and steadying herself by Cecil's arm, walked with feeble, tottering steps. Her strength, cruelly overtaken by the long night ride, and by hours of weary waiting at the bare village station-room for the morning, and the walk afterward, would have deserted her entirely but for the fever-flood in her veins.

Cecil led her toward a side entrance, but before it was reached heard the sound of approaching footsteps. Quickly as possible she drew her charge within an angle of the building, where a door opened into that portion which had been the original structure. They were half-concealed by the ivy swaying from the walls, and Cecil, peering out, saw Emmy Brown go by without glancing toward them.

She drew a long sigh of relief. The interruption or the heavy old door at their backs had given her a new thought. Eve had sunk down upon the broad stone steps, and leaving her there with a word of caution, Cecil went rapidly forward into the house alone.

Instead of going to her own chamber, she made her way directly to the housekeeper's room. The door was ajar and no one was within. A bunch of keys, rusted by long disuse, hung upon the wall. She went in softly and took them from the nail, and then sped swiftly through the darkened passage-ways into that unoccupied portion of the house near which she had left Eve.

She fitted the key into the ponderous lock of the heavy door, and exerting all her strength, it turned with a harsh, grating sound. The door creaked upon its hinges, and fell back slowly, as if resisting the will which moved it.

Eve obeyed her word in the same unquestioning, stupefied way in which she had submitted to be guided before. Cecil half-led, half-supported her through the empty halls and up the winding stairway, carpetless and black with age. Above was a square landing large as a moderate-sized room, from each side of which doors opened.

The mistress of Frampton Place had once explored these unused apartments in gratification of an idle curiosity, and now had no difficulty in deciding which was best suited to her purpose.

She led the way into a room, oblong in shape, with deep recesses in which the high narrow windows were set. The casements were filled with tiny diamond panes which were crusted over with the dust of years. Ivy crept over them without, and though the heavy faded draperies were looped back, the light which struggled in still left the apartment in semi-obscurity.

There was a carpet, worn thin, and gray with dust upon the floor. A few pieces of heavy, carved furniture, of a style which bespoke it centuries old, and others more modern, which had been placed here when discarded from later use.

There was no bed, but a wide old sofa in a corner, so heavy and substantial that it appeared a fixture there, supplied the place of one. The room had evidently been well furnished in its day; a great square mirror, across which spiders had spun their webs, its gilt frame all tarnished now, filled the space between two recesses on one side. Everywhere else the walls were bare black

panels; there was no fireplace, and no outlet, save the door by which they had entered.

Cecil, with her handkerchief, dusted off the faded velvet cushions of the old sofa, and Eve, trembling from weakness and fatigue, sunk down upon it. Her blood was fever hot, but over-exertion quelled the fever force with a torpor which deadened her senses to the action of pain. It seemed to her that she wanted nothing so much as quietude and rest.

She sunk almost immediately into a doze, and Cecil, after seeing her as comfortable as circumstances would admit, went softly away, locking the door after her.

She detached the key belonging to it from the ring, and succeeded in replacing the others in the housekeeper's room, unobserved.

Then, worn upon by the occurrences of the morning, she retired to her own chamber. She did not go down to lunch that day, but drank a headache, and had a cup of strong tea brought to her.

Afterward she darkened the room, and threw herself upon a couch, not to sleep, but to think.

Late in the afternoon she paid a stolen visit to Eve, taking with her a pitcher of ice-water, and the tray containing her own luncheon.

Eve lay in a deep stupor, from which Cecil's presence did not arouse her. The latter, regarding her intently, went away with a satisfied expression upon her face.

Eve never woke until the gray dawn of the following day was struggling in at the dimmed windows. Then every limb seemed chained down by a dead weight, and all her faculties put to rest except her sense of burning thirst.

With an effort she put out her hand, and it came in contact with the pitcher of water left by her side.

She dragged her head wearily from the pillows, and drank long and eagerly. Then she slept again, more naturally, and flashes of pain occasionally penetrated her unconsciousness, causing her to stir and moan without awaking.

CHAPTER XV.

THE POTENT POTION.

DURING the evening of the day treated of in the preceding chapter, Cecil announced her determination of going to the city to personally give directions regarding the altered setting of the diamonds.

"I have other errands less important," she said, "but which will not occupy much time. By taking the early train I can easily accomplish all, and return in the afternoon. Please order the carriage to take me to the depot, to-morrow, Hugh!"

"To-morrow? Why, really, Eve, I'm afraid I can't attend you, to-morrow. There's the agent coming with the Dubarre rents, and I asked Moss to meet him here concerning that Jersey property of his. Will not the next day answer?"

"Oh, I don't mean that you shall accompany me. I required an escort, I'm sure. Victor would not refuse his services, but you men have no patience with our feminine delight in shopping. I shall go quite alone, without inconvenience."

So in the gray of early morning Giles drove the carriage over to the village depot, and received her instructions for his return in the evening. At ten she was in New York, and calling first at Tiffany's, left the diamonds which she had brought with her.

After that she executed a few other trifling commissions, and then threading her way through the busy thoroughfare, hailed a passing car for a more obscure section of the city.

The street upon which she alighted was narrow and dark, shut in closely by tall, dingy buildings, from nearly all of which came the confused buzz of trade. This had been the business part of the city once, where the solid firms had built up the foundations of those princely establishments that now grace Broadway; and the narrow, dark storerooms which crowded each other on either side, were just as busy now with their motley throng of slipshod customers, as when, a score or so of years before, the sidewalk there a notable promenade.

Cecil paused upon the corner, looking keenly about her. She was little known in the city, and it seemed most unlikely that any of their Frampton neighbors should chance to encounter her there. Yet, after satisfying herself that only strange faces were about her, she drew her thick veil still closer, and walked rapidly, as though quite familiar with the locality.

The one chance out of a hundred that she should encounter an acquaintance, rose up before her so suddenly that she involuntarily checked her steps with a qualm of dismay for the moment overruling her self-possession.

In the open doorway of a hardware emporium, scrutinizing an array of agricultural implements, stood Mr. Darnley.

Almost instantly Cecil recovered herself, and passed by him so closely that by putting out her hand she could have touched him. Something drew his attention toward her retreating figure, and he turned to follow her with his gaze, dimly conscious of some familiar element about her.

"Thought for a moment it was some one I knew," he soliloquized. "It beats all what striking resemblances we chance across among people."

He saw her disappear within a doorway which the colored globes in the window indicated as belonging to a pharmacist's shop; and then turned back to forget his impression in his contemplation of patent plows and reapers.

The place Cecil entered was small and fitted up after the manner of stores of its kind. A narrow dark counter ran the whole length of the room, behind which was a range of shelves and drawers, and the atmosphere was heavy with the odor of drugs. A youthful clerk was busy over a mortar, but left it with alacrity as she entered.

His expectation of a customer was disappointed, however, for she passed through to an inner door and rapped. After a moment it opened to admit her into the presence of a tall, gaunt figure, with hair and flowing beard snow white, and hollow, cavernous eyes, set in a countenance of unmistakably Jewish cast. He spoke, however, without the idiom which commonly marks the speech of his race.

"The lady requires private advice, I presume?"

His manner and his words were significant of the fact that his time was precious; but Cecil seated herself without removing the close folds of her veil, and motioned him to follow her example.

"I have heard much of Mr. Isaac's skill," she replied, "and may avail myself of it. I have been recommended to you as having no equal in preparing beneficial compounds."

The Jew bowed his head in humble deprecation.

"My friends do me honor," said he. "I use my title of knowledge for the good of my fellow-man."

"Some slight sarcasm tinged Cecil's voice. 'I have been assured of that, before!'"

"Ah! perhaps the lady is not here for the first time?"

The Israelite regarded her suspiciously, and Cecil, though secretly annoyed, let no evidence of it appear.

"You mistake," she replied, "but I am anxious to test the virtues ascribed to your preparations."

"What is it you require?"

She dropped her voice to a lower cadence, though assured that they were quite alone. "I wish a potion which will, when administered, act upon the patient's mind and will, leaving him powerless to project or carry out any active measure—something which will stupefy the senses without injuring the body."

"What you ask is difficult to prepare, and very expensive."

"You have but to name your price."

The Jew's sunken eyes glittered. He assumed a despondent expression.

"Such a potion and quite harmless? Ah, madam, that is impossible unless administered precisely as I direct. And I would not dare trust a powerful compound in the hands of a stranger—pardon me! you must know what danger I would incur."

Cecil made an impatient gesture and drew out her well-filled portemonnaie. "Lay aside your scruples, Mr. Isaac," she said, coolly. "My time is too limited to be spent in idle dallying."

A malicious gleam mingled with the covetous glitter in the Jew's downcast eyes. He spoke with persuasive softness.

"Madam will assure me that the potion is merely for the use she mentioned, and that my instructions shall be followed to the letter?"

Cecil leaned toward him, speaking impressively.

"Make it powerful, Mr. Isaac; and of such a nature that if a mistake should occur, no traces shall be left. You understand?"

"I understand!" the Israelite replied, endeavoring in vain to penetrate the folds of the concealing veil.

"Then pray, let me have such a preparation at once. I will wait for it."

"Ah, madam! It requires time to produce such a compound."

"How much," she queried, shortly.

"I think I could promise it in two days."

Cecil drew out her watch.

"It is now after one," she said. "I will call again at three precisely, when you will have the potion ready. Pray do not disappoint me. I have heard that you are never without preparations of the nature I require. Let me ask your price."

"I told you it would be expensive."

"Will fifty dollars recompense you?"

He shook his head slowly.

"A hundred, at the lowest figure."

She did not stop to parley with him. "Here is half to your hand! The remainder shall be paid when I receive the mixture. Remember, at three precisely."

"It will be ready, madam."

Cecil pushed aside her veil slightly as she counted the sum from her portemonnaie, and the Israelite caught an imperfect glimpse of her features.

He stood in an attitude of deep thought, unmindful even of the crisp bills in his hand, after the door closed behind her.

"I have seen her before," he mused, "but where? The idea is there, but confused. Ah, I have it! Three—four—five years ago! I was less cautious then, and it was poison—deadly almost to the touch; but she had the antidote, too. I remember now."

When Cecil came again, later, he was ready with the mixture he had promised. It was harmless-looking, clear as water, and he averred quite tasteless.

"A single drop once a day will render the patient quiescent and tractable; double that quantity will produce stupor and confusion of the mental faculties. It can not be given with safety in larger doses at consecutive periods."

"If the quantity be gradually increased, or an overdose accidentally given, what would be the effect? Do not be alarmed, Mr. Isaac; I promise you it shall not occur; but I wish to know the properties of the compound."

"An overdose, say six drops or more, would throw the patient into a state of coma, closely resembling actual death, from which only the most desperate remedies could revive him. A gradual increase—very gradual—would result in slow wasting away without any apparent cause. You will be very careful?"

"You have my word."

She paid him the remainder of the price agreed upon, and departed.

It was sunset when she stepped from the cars at Frampton. The carriage was awaiting her, but, instead of Giles, Mr. Frampton himself had driven it there.

"I couldn't deny myself the pleasure," he said, as he met her. "It has been a long, lonely day to me. I think you have quite spoiled me, Eve."

her humble, kind friend, and former landlady.

She moved her head restlessly, and her parched lips opened to the moan:

"Water! water!"

Cecil had brought food and a pitcher of ice-water as on the preceding evening. She saw at a glance that the victuals upon the tray remained untouched, and knew how needless it would be to offer such. She gave her water at short intervals, until her thirst was for the time appeased; and then brought wraps and soft downy pillows with which to make the invalid's couch more comfortable.

When this was done, and she had bathed the fever-flushed face and burning hands, she went away again, leaving the blank darkness of the night, and the solitude of all those empty rooms to weigh down upon the distorted imagination of the sick girl.

After all there was no present need of the potion she had procured. She had meant simply to keep her in a quiescent state, until she could mature her own plan of future action. The more she pondered, the more she felt that she could not give up the diamond.

Beneath the fact that their absence would at once provoke questioning, was another consideration which she clung to with the faith which is born of selfish desire.

When Victor should know of this emergency, surely he would forego all other plans to snatch her from the threatening danger of exposure.

And the diamonds, if all else should fail, were in themselves sufficient to insure their future.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 107.)

Tracked to Death: THE LAST SHOT.

BY CAPT. MAYNE REID.
AUTHOR OF "HELLISH HAND," "LONE RANCHER,"
"SCALP HUNTERS," "WHITE CHIEF," ETC.

CHAPTER XLIX. IN HOT HASTE.

THREE days and part of a fourth had elapsed since Colonel Armstrong and his emigrants crossed the Colorado and went up the valley of the San Saba.

On the fourth, some hours before sunset, another party made the same crossing, and set their faces in the same direction—continuing on up the tributary river.

They were on horseback, without wagons or other impediments to retard the course of their journey. They appeared to be traveling in hot haste, mounted upon roadsters that were making good time, and had the look of having done so for days. One of them bedrode a mule.

There were five in the party, four being white men. The fifth, who rode the hybrid, was of a color closely resembling that of a new saddle.

A dog, of deerhound breed, was trotting behind them. It is scarcely necessary to tell who they were. The reader will have surmised that the white men were Clancy, Woodley, Heywood and Harkness; while he of the tawny complexion was Ephraim Dawke's runaway slave, Jupiter.

Soon after crossing the Colorado, they had struck the bank of the San Saba, along which they rode rapidly. They reached the fording-place of the latter stream just as night closed down upon them.

The moon would not be up for an hour or two; and it was now so dark that only one well used to the way could make further progress along the San Saba's bank, or attempt crossing the stream.

Simone Woodley could have done this. He had been there before, and was intimately acquainted with the crossing, as also with the trail that led up the San Saba valley, on the right side of the river. This, so lately tracked by Armstrong's emigrant-train, made it all the easier to follow; so easy, that the old hunter, as he said in his forcible phraseology, "ked grope his way along it of the sky war kivered w' a coat o' tar."

He did not attempt to do this, although Clancy keenly desired it. The urgency of the latter arose from what Harkness had been telling them along the way. In addition to the information which the recreant jail-keeper had hastily imparted to them on the banks of the Sabine, he had since made other revelations of a like startling character. He had spoken of a diabolical plan that not only compromised the safety of Colonel Armstrong and his daughters, but the whole colony he had taken into Western Texas.

It was not of the colony Charles Clancy was thinking, and he was little anxious about its success. He could have borne the thought of its getting scattered to the four corners of Texas—even totally destroyed—if he were but sure of saving the Armstrongs from the terrible fate which, as he now knew, was impending over them.

It was chiefly the two girls who were in peril—one claiming his anxiety more than the other; in truth, almost absorbing it. Over the head of his sweetheart, late doubted, now more than ever beloved, hung a danger worse than death. He was hurrying forward in the hope of being able to avert it. No wonder at his desire for haste, and the nervous excitement he displayed while urging his companions onward.

It had been the same with him all the way since leaving the Sabine river. For weeks they had been following the wagon-trail of Armstrong's expedition; every day, as the signs told them, getting nearer it. But now they had arrived on the banks of the San Saba, and it was still not overtaken. Nor was it, when they had ridden up the stream and reached the ford where the wagons had made crossing to the right bank.

Clancy's anxiety but increased as they approached the spot where the colonists were to terminate their journey, now not more than ten miles off. For, by the revelations of Harkness, this was the place of danger most to be apprehended. There, along the river's bank, was the wagon-trail, clear to the eyes of all.

Had the emigrants succeeded in reaching a haven of safety? This was the thought now—the all-absorbing thought—of Charles Clancy; and the question he asked as he and his fellow-travelers had for a moment pulled up, and sat in their saddles contemplating the wheel-tracks.

It was to Simone Woodley he addressed it. Heywood, however true his heart, was but a novice on the prairies; Harkness still only a sort of prisoner, and Jupiter a protégé.

"Keep y'r patience, Charley Clancy," was the backwoodsman's reply. "Take Simone

Woodley's word for 't, things 'll be all right. Ye don't know Kurnel Armstrong as well's I do; though I admit you may have a better understanding of the ways o' one as bears the same name. But for the old kurnel himself this coon's campaign'd 'long w' him in the Creek and Cherokee war, and kin say for sartin he won't go to sleep 'thout keepin' one o' his eyes open—an' that the one as sees cl'arest. Tharfor, don't you be unner any foolish belief 'bout thar being attacked on thar journey—eyther by Injuns or any other sort o' bandits as b'longs to the Texan purairs. His party war too strong, an' the men composin' it too experienced, to be in any dang' o' trouble on the way. Thar air more likely to come arterward, when they're settled down, an' ain't thinkin' o' any suspishun. Then thar mout be a chance o' circumventin' them. An' then we'll be thar to prevent it. Leastwise, Simone Woodley think so. Tharfor, as we're all tired down, our hosses more'n ourselves, I say let's pass the night hyar, an' gie the animals a rest. In the mornin', by early sun-up, we kin purreed on ag'in; an' afore mid-day we shall sight the walls o' the ole mission, whar I reckon, Charley Clancy, you 'll find, yer yer've been so long trackin' arter, all som' an' safe. Afore kumpany I won't say a word about who thar ar."

This comforting assurance tranquilized Clancy's spirit, and checked his impatience. He, with his traveling companions and their horses, had need of rest. They had been journeying for over two weeks, at a rate of speed known only to pursuers.

In Woodley's opinion, this seemed no longer necessary; and, relying upon it, Clancy, the acknowledged leader of the party, consented to a halt.

They tied their horses to the trees, unsaddled them, cooked and ate their frugal supper; and then lay down to sleep on the San Saba's bank, close to the crossing-place, without having made passage of the stream. They had not even followed the path leading down to the river's ford, as far as the water's edge.

Had they done so, they might have observed other tracks than those made by the emigrants, who had crossed the stream some days before.

On the sloping bank, rendered soft by a late shower of rain, were the hoof-marks of at least twenty horses, most of them unshod. They appeared recent, as though made less than an hour before. And they were the traces of horses that carried men upon their backs. Any Texan could have told this.

Had Simone Woodley, or even Clancy himself, seen them, he would at once have said so. And either would have known that their riders did not belong to the colonizing party of Colonel Armstrong.

But both might have suspected—ay, would have been sure to suspect—that they had something to do with it; in short, that they threatened its destruction.

Could Simone Woodley or Charles Clancy, as the two lay down side by side on the river's edge, intending a tranquil sleep; could they have had revealed to them what was at that moment passing some few miles further up the San Saba, they would have started from their grassy couches; rushed direct for their horses, calling upon their fellow-travelers to do the same; and then, plunging across the ford, without fear of what was before them, spurred on toward the old Mission as if the building were in flames, and they alone had the power to extinguish them.

CHAPTER L. A SUSPECTED SERVANT.

IN the former refectory of the Mission, which Colonel Armstrong—or, perhaps, better say Dupre—had converted into a decent dining-room, the colonel was seated, in company with his future son-in-law, and some four or five of their fellow-colonists of the better class. It was on an evening shortly after their taking possession of the place.

The hour was not late; only paulo-post-prandial, if I may be allowed the use of a somewhat pedantic expression.

They were still around the dinner-table, after the ladies had withdrawn—drinking some of the choice claret and gnawing the well-preserved olives which the young Louisiana planter had brought along with him. It did not need either the red wine of Bordeaux, or the fruit of Southern France, to render the party hilarious. The splendid prospect before them—the hope of making fortunes by growing long-staple cotton which all of them had—was of itself sufficiently exhilarating.

Up to a certain hour this was the subject of their conversation. Then it became diverted to a different topic—to a man who had waited upon them at dinner, but who was no longer seen entering the room.

He was Dupre's confidential servant; a sort of steward or butler, having charge of important affairs, and rule over the other domestics.

As is usual with such grand dignitaries, he had disappeared shortly after the removal of the table-cloth, leaving a deputy to look to the glasses and decanters. Therefore, there was nothing remarkable about his defection. Nor would there have been ought observable in it, but for a circumstance communicated by one of the guests during the course of the conversation. A young surgeon, late of Natchitoches, who had cast in his lot with the new colony, was he who made reference to the matter; which was introduced thus:

"Mr. Dupre, where did you get that fellow who is acting as your major-domo? I don't remember to have seen him on your Louisiana plantation."

"You mean Fernand. Oh! I picked him up in Natchitoches, while we were organizing there. You know I lost my old right-hand man last fall by the yellow fever. It took him off while I was down in New Orleans. Fernand, however, is superior to him in every way. The fellow keeps plantation accounts, waits at table, drives a coach, or helps in a hunt. He's a genius of wonderful versatility; and, above all, devoted to his duties."

"What breed is he?" asked another of Colonel Armstrong's guests. "He looks to be a cross between Spaniard and Indian."

"That's just what he is—at least, he has told me so. He says his father was a Spaniard and his mother an Indian woman of the Seminole tribe. His real name is Fernandez; but for convenience I usually drop the final syllable."

"It's a bad sort of cross, that between Spaniard and Seminole," remarked the second inquirer, but without giving his reasons.

"I don't like his looks," observed a third.

Then all around the table waited to hear what the first speaker had to say about him.

It was clear, from the way he had originated the conversation, that the young medical man either knew or suspected something prejudicial to the major-domo of mixed blood. He continued it by putting a second interrogatory.

"May I ask, Mr. Dupre, whether you had any character with him?"

"No, indeed," admitted the young planter. "He came to me just before we left Natchitoches, asking for an engagement. Any place, he said, would do for him. Seeing him to be a smart sort of fellow, which he certainly has proved, I engaged him to look after my personal baggage. Since, I have found him useful in other ways, and have given him full charge of everything, even to the guarding of my modest money-chest; which, it is true, has got inside of it some fifty thousand dollars, or thereabouts."

"In trusting him so," pursued the surgeon, "do you not think you are acting somewhat imprudently? I hope you will excuse me for making the observation."

"Oh, certainly," was the young planter's frank reply. "But why do you think so, Mr. Wharton? Have you any reason to suspect Fernand's honesty?"

"I have more than one reason. First, because I don't like the looks of the man. I never did since the day of starting out. Never having seen or heard of him before, I could have no impression to prejudice me against him. That came the first moment I set eyes on him, though I can't tell why. In reading physiognomy any one may be mistaken; and I shouldn't have allowed myself to be led by that. In this matter, however, something besides—a thing of late occurrence—has contributed to the shaping of my judgment; in fact, decided me that your servant is not only dishonest, but that he may be even worse than a thief."

"Indeed!" was the almost simultaneous exclamation from all sides of the table, succeeded by a universal demand for explanation.

"Your words have a weighty sound, doctor," was Colonel Armstrong's way of putting it. "We are all anxious to hear what they mean."

"I'll tell you why I make use of them, and what has caused me to come to such sinister conclusions about Fernand. You can all, of course, draw your own deductions. Last night at a late hour—indeed, midnight—I took a fancy into my head to have a stroll upon the prairie. Lighting a weed, I started out. I can't say exactly how far I may have gone; but I know that the cigar—a long 'Henry Clay'—was burnt to near the end before I thought of turning back. As I was about to do so I heard a sound, easily made out to be the footsteps of a man, treading the firm prairie turf. I chanced just then to be standing under a pecan-tree that covered me with its shadow."

"I kept my ground without making any noise. Shortly after, I saw the man whose footfall I had heard, and recognized him as Mr. Dupre's head servant. He was coming from the direction of the lower crossing of the river, where, as you all know, there is no settlement of any kind. I might not have thought much of that, had I not noticed, as he passed me, going on for the house here, that he didn't walk erect or on the open path, but crouching, keeping among the trees that skirted it."

"Throwing away the stump of my cigar, I started after him, treading as stealthily as he. Instead of entering by the front, he kept round the garden-wall, all the way to the rear, where suddenly I lost sight of him. On coming up to the spot where he had so mysteriously disappeared, I saw that there was a breach in the *ochole* wall. Through that, of course, he must have passed, and entered the Mission building at the back. Now what are you to make of all that?"

"What do you make of it, Wharton?" asked Dupre. "Continue on, and tell us your deductions."

"To say the truth, I don't know what deductions to draw. I confess myself unable to account for the fellow's movements; which I think all of you will acknowledge to have been a little odd. As I've said, I didn't from the first like your man of versatile talents, and am now more than ever distrustful of him. For all that, I can't think of what he was after last night. Can any of you?"

No one could. The strange behavior of Fernand, as witnessed by Wharton, was a puzzle to all present. At the same time, and under the circumstances, it had a really serious aspect. Several attempts were made to explain it; all conjectures, and none of them with much appearance of probability.

Had there been any neighboring settlement of civilized men, Dupre's domestic might have been supposed returning from a visit to it; entering stealthily, from being out late, under fear of rebuke by his master. As there were no such neighbors, this theory could not be entertained.

On the other hand, had there been any report of hostile savages seen in proximity to the place, the man's strange conduct might then have been accounted for, upon a hypothesis that would, no doubt, have carried apprehension to those who were discussing it.

As no savages had been seen or heard of—either on their way to the San Saba or since their arrival—as it was known that the Southern Comanches, the only Indians likely to be there encountered, were then in treaty of peace with the Texan Government, the nocturnal excursion and stealthy movements of the half-blood could not well be connected with anything of this kind.

In fine, while being a puzzle to the guests around the dining-table, it remained for the time an unsolved problem.

Amid the free quaffing of claret, the gnawing of olives, and the cracking of walnuts—the nuts being of native growth, gathered out of the neglected Mission garden—the subject was dropped; the conversation turning to other and pleasanter themes.

CHAPTER LI. CONTRASTING EMBLEMS.

"WHAT sybarites the old Spanish *padres* must have been! Look at the way they have laid out these grounds! See the seats placed under shade trees. And how pretty that fountain must have looked when it was playing! Whatever may be said of their morals, it must be admitted they displayed good taste in their landscape-gardening, and they had an eye to luxury as well."

It was Jessie Armstrong who spoke thus learnedly; the speech addressed to her sister Helen, as the two were strolling through the garden grounds of the old Mission, a few days after becoming its inmates.

It was at night, instead of in the day—the same night, and at the same hour, when

the gentlemen around the dinner-table were discussing the character of the suspected servant.

On retiring from the table, the two young ladies, who on that evening chanced to be without company of their own sex, instead of shutting themselves up in the somewhat gloomy *sala* or sitting-room of the Mission, had strolled out into the open air—a bright moon having tempted them forth.

It was after they had been sauntering for some time along the garden paths that the younger of the two made her observations concerning the former occupants of the place.

"As to their sybaritish tastes," rejoined the elder, "I can't answer. One thing certain, they had a taste for fruit; and a great fondness for it, I should say. They appear also to have relished a goodly variety of it."

As Helen said this she glanced around at the trees. They were fruit-trees of almost every species that send their products to market. Among them the orange, lime, and shaddock, the mango, guava and grenadine, peaches and quinces, with the commoner stock of a more northern clime, as pears, apples, apricots, plums, pomegranates, cherries and nectarines. Here and there a coccopalme raised its plumed head, towering far above the tops of the exogenous species; and in warm, shady spots could be seen the broad, shining leaves of the plantain and banana. Not all of them were observable at that hour under the moonlight; but the girls had been in the garden before, and knew they were there.

As scarcely any of the above-mentioned trees are indigenous to Texas, they must have been introduced into the Mission garden by the men who, "leading a good life," also took good care to "live well."

"So much the better for us," gleefully remarked Jessie. "From so many sweet-scented flowers we shall be sure to obtain some savory fruit when the time comes. Oh, Helen! won't it be a beautiful place when we get these walks graveled and the fountain restored? Louis has promised it shall be all done as soon as the cotton crop is planted. It will then be a perfect paradise of a place, won't it?"

"I like it better in the wild state—as it is. For my part, I should prefer it remaining so. There's something in its desolation that pleases me."

A sigh accompanied the remark, which seemed to come from a heart itself desolated.

"Sister!" returned Jessie, "I'm surprised to hear you speak in that way. Our being in Texas is no reason for our becoming savages; leaving every thing uncultivated, and living in a wilderness. No. And I'm determined on making Louis have this old garden and grounds laid out anew; in as good style as they were ever in, perhaps better. Yes; he shall do it when he marries me—if not before."

To this pretty bit of bantering Helen's only answer was another sigh, as deep-heaved as that which had preceded it—perhaps more painful. For once again she could not help contrasting her own poor position with the proud one now attained by her younger sister. In reality, Louis Dupre was master of all around, being proprietor of all; though, to do him justice, the Creole gracefully conceded to his future father-in-law the conduct, as also the leadership, in every thing. But there was a master above both, whom the young planter dared not disobey; one who led him in a silken leash, stronger than any chain of steel or iron. This was his affianced, whose golden tresses were dearer to him than all the gold he had carried into Texas.

At thought of all this, Helen Armstrong, once proud, perhaps felt some humiliation. She could not well help it. But in her crushed heart there was no jealousy, nor even envy, at her sister's smiling fortunes. Could Charles Clancy have come to life again, now that she knew he had been true; could he have been by her side, sharing with her the humblest hut in Texas, all the splendors promised her sister, all the grandeur of earth, would not have given her one emotion more; nor could they, in any way, have excited her thoughts to envy.

There was no reply to Jessie's enthusiastic speech, who, giving way to pleasant fancies of the future, walked on to the bottom of the garden, Helen silently following.

As Jessie turned round, the sisters came face to face; and the younger now saw anguish plainly depicted in that of the elder. With a sudden fear that her words just spoken might have something to do with it, she was about to speak other words intended to give comfort, when a gesture from Helen kept her silent. In the spot where they stood two trees overshadowed the walk, their branches arching over it. Both were emblematic trees; one symbolizing the most joyous hour of life, the other its saddest. They were an orange and a cypress. The former was in full bloom, as it almost always appears; the latter in leaf, with no bloom seen upon it.

Helen Armstrong, standing between the two, extended an arm to each, and plucked from the one a sprig, from the other a flower. Holding the latter in her snow-white fingers, more attenuated than of yore, she dexterously placed it amid Jessie's golden tresses; at the same time setting the other behind a plait of her own raven hair; as she did so, saying:

"That for you, sister; this for me. We are now decked out as befits us—as we shall both soon be—you for the bridal, I for the tomb."

CHAPTER LII. A STEALTHY INTRUDER.

THE sad words, seeming but too prophetic; the wan cheek and somber, shadowy brow—plainly seen under the pale moonlight—all went to the heart of Jessie Armstrong like an arrow with poisoned point. In an instant her own joy was gone—sunk into the sorrow of her sister.

And she herself had sunk upon that sister's bosom, with arms extended around her neck, and tears falling thick and fast over Helen's swan-white shoulders.

It was not the first time the younger daughter of Colonel Armstrong had thus essayed to give comfort to the elder. Almost every day since that dread night when Clancy's defection and supposed treachery had stricken the latter down, did the former find occasion to show her sympathy. And never more than now. For as Helen stood in the attitude assumed by her, holding in one hand the symbol of light and happy life, in the other the emblem of darkness and death, she seemed the personification of despair. With her splendid cast of features and magnificent outline of form—both superb, grand, commanding—she might have been regarded as its goddess.

The ancient Greek sculptors, or painters, would have given much for such a model, from which to carve or draw the Deity of Despair.

For a time the sisters stood with entwined arms, their cheeks in contact, their tears commingling. Jessie's sobs were louder than the sighs she had essayed to change into smiles; her grief greater than that she was trying to assuage.

Helen, perceiving this, rose superior to the occasion; and, as many times before, in turn became the comforter. How often do the scales of happiness and misery thus vibrate upon the beam!

The two sweet girls had well-nigh succeeded in their mutual endeavors of affection—Helen to restore her sister's joy, Jessie to stay the grief that had suddenly checked it. But just at that moment a third personage appeared upon the scene; causing each to cease caressing the other, and for a time stifling the emotions of both, by turning their thoughts into a new channel.

The person whose appearance produced this sudden change was a man, who seemed wholly unconscious of the influence he had exerted; and, indeed, was so.

Perhaps better for him, and worse for them, that he was seen without seeing. Had it been otherwise, he might have been stayed in his devilish design—in the end hindered from executing it.

That it was of this character his movements gave proof. When first seen, he was coming from the back of the Mission building, down the main central walk, under the shadow of the garden trees.

He was not stepping out with the air of one who goes regardless of observation. On the contrary, he walked skulkingly, and with catlike tread; every now and then casting a glance over his shoulder, as if in fear of being followed.

It was just this that hindered him from seeing those who were observing him. The two girls were close together, with arms still entwined, on one of the side-walks and in shadow. On first hearing the footsteps they were about to separate.

To Jessie they were sources of joy, for she fancied it was Dupre coming to join them. Only for a moment. The tread was too light for a man marching with honest intent, and the steps too shuffling to be those of the young planter.

There were no footsteps that could give gladness to Helen; not even those of the young surgeon, Wharton, whose late tender assiduities were but irksome to her. The manly tread, that to her in times past was wont to cause a quick pulsing of the heart, could never more be heard by her. If a disappointment to the younger sister, it was none to the elder, when they saw that the man coming along the garden walk was neither Wharton nor Dupre, but only the servant of the latter.

The first thought of both was one of irritation, at being intruded upon. At such a time, in the midst of most sacred emotions, and by a man they both instinctively disliked. Still the servant might be seeking them with some message from the house, which would of course be excuse sufficient. Concluding his errand to be this they waited to receive him, both observing silence.

When nearly opposite the spot where they stood, they saw that the man moved stealthily; and noticed other gestures which on his part betrayed apprehension.

"Strange!" whispered Jessie into her sister's ear; who replied by placing a finger on her lips, to admonish silence.

They remained motionless as before, and without further exchange of speech, till the half-blood, gliding past the place, suddenly disappeared from their sight.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 97.)

The Red Mazeppa: OR, THE MADMAN OF THE PLAINS.

A STRANGE STORY OF THE TEXAN FRONTIER!

[THE RIGHT OF DRAMATIZATION RESERVED.]

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.
AUTHOR OF "D'ORLAND KID," "WOLF DEMON," "AGE OF SPADES," "WITCHES OF NEW YORK," ETC.

CHAPTER XXIX. A NEW TRAIL.

"LET find her, if Mexico holds her!" quoth the Panther, as he crossed the courtyard. "By the Virgin, I have put the cart before the horse in this matter; I should have first found the heir and then sought Bandera. Caramba! my wits have been wool-gathering! It is not too late yet, though. My gentle senor spoke very confidently when he proclaimed that the heir was dead." The adventurer came to a sudden halt, and pulled the ends of his long mustache reflectively. "Can it be possible that, by some lucky chance, he has stumbled upon the heir, recognized and removed the only obstacle between him and the broad acres of Bandera? Ponce, like myself, is a son of the devil, and Satan always aids his own. The end of this affair, though, will prove which of us is the favored son. I've run one fox to earth—one trail to its end; now, sleuth-hound-like, I'll give tongue upon the other. Oh, Satan, great king of evil, aid now thy son!"

With this pious invocation upon his lips, the Panther proceeded upon his way. The broad and arching gateway that led from the courtyard of the hacienda to the outer air was lit by a single huge candle that flamed furiously from its socket in the wall.

Beneath the candle sat a man, his face buried in his hands.

Lope glanced at the apparent sleeper as he approached.

The glance told him that the man was a herdsman; the fashion of his dress denoted that.

Roused from his sleep—or abstraction, whichever it was—by the sound of the Panther's footsteps approaching, the herdsman raised his head.

The light of the candle flashed upon his face.

A single look the adventurer gave at the features of the herdsman, and then he halted, as though transfixed by astonishment.

"St. Jago!" murmured the Panther, in blank surprise.

On his part the herdsman looked at the Mexican with astonishment plainly apparent in his stolid features. It was evident that Lope was a stranger to him.

"Satan has answered my prayer, or else this is the strangest resemblance that the world has ever seen," the adventurer muttered between his teeth.

A second searching glance the Panther gave at the dusky face of the herdsman.

"It can not be accident," he muttered, in a tone of firm conviction.

Then, with a gracious smile upon his face, he accosted the herdsman.

"Senior, I never saw such a resemblance in all my life—your face and the features of a comrade of mine with whom I served in Southern Mexico some twenty years ago. He was somewhat lighter in complexion than yourself, but the moment I saw your face, I inwardly exclaimed, yonder is the son of my old friend. What might I call your name?"

"Juan," replied the herdsman, evidently thoroughly astonished by the manner of the stranger.

"And you are employed by my worthy friend, Ponce de Bandera here?" the Panther questioned, carelessly.

"Yes, senior; I was engaged this very day."

"Is Bandera blind?" muttered the Panther between his teeth, "or has he noted the resemblance and taken this fellow into his service that he might keep his eyes upon him? The first move in the game is his, but the second is mine, and I'll play at once. Now, my gentle Ponce, put your wits to work, for it is a nut of iron that I give you to crack."

Lope stepped forward, and placed his hand upon the shoulder of the herdsman with an appearance of great kindness.

"By the saints, I swear that the sight of your face is more welcome to me than would be the gift of a hundred golden ounces. That you are the son of my old friend I am sure. What was your father's name?"

"I do not know, senior," replied the herdsman; "I never knew who my parents were. I am an orphan."

"But you remember something of your childhood?"

"Oh, yes."

"My life against a coyote's tail that you are the man I take you for!" cried Lope, confidently.

"If you have nothing better to do, come with me, and over a glass of mescal you shall tell me of your life, and then, possibly, I can put you on a scent which shall lead to fortune."

The herdsman opened his great black eyes wide in astonishment.

"Oh, do not doubt my power until I have tried and failed!" exclaimed the Panther. "Come with me and test whether my guess be true or false."

The herdsman rose slowly to his feet; there was a peculiar look upon his dusky face and a strange light shining in his dark eyes.

"Well, I will go, senior," he said.

The Panther cast a rapid glance at the herdsman's face as he passed by him. In the face he saw something that puzzled him. There was a certain expression there that seemed foreign to the stolid features of the half-breed.

"I must take care how I handle this tool," he murmured to himself, as he passed through the gateway and led the way into the gloom; "the edge is sharp, and I may cut my own fingers with it if I am not watchful."

In the road the adventurer drew the arm of the herdsman within his own, and the two bent their footsteps toward Dianis.

As they walked on, arm and arm, the Panther beguiled the way with many a strange story of daring adventures and desperate struggles for fortune.

The herdsman listened attentively, but made answer only by monosyllables.

If it was the purpose of the adventurer to draw the other from his reserve he failed most signally. But Lope, neither by word or look betrayed that he was defeated in his endeavor.

The silver tone of the Mission bell, ringing out clear on the night air, told that the hour of ten had come, when the strange comrades halted before the door of the little wine-shop kept by Diego.

The light shining through the lattice window showed that the wine-shop was still open.

Without ceremony, Lope pushed open the door and entered, the herdsman following at his heels.

Diego sat within the room, fast asleep. The abrupt entrance of the two awoke him rudely from his slumber. He rose, rubbed his eyes, and scowled deeply when he saw that the adventurer was his guest.

"A flask of mescal, worthy Diego," said the Panther, tossing a silver coin down upon the table.

The dull eyes of the Mexican host brightened somewhat at the sight of the glittering coin.

"Yes, senior," he said, picking up the money and quitting the room.

"Be seated, senior," cried Lope, courteously placing a chair for the herdsman.

The half-breed seated himself by the table, but, as he sat down, cast a wary glance around as though he feared danger.

The look was not lost upon Lope.

"What the devil is he afraid of?" the Panther muttered to himself. "One would think that he was a criminal who feared an officer of justice in each shadow."

The Panther sat down opposite to his guest, just a little puzzled.

Diego brought the flask of mescal into the room, placed it upon the table and then withdrew.

Lope filled the leaden cups, which were on the table, full to the brim with the fiery liquor, pushed one across to the herdsman and raised the other to his lips.

"We'll drink to your father's memory," he said.

At a single draught the Panther drained the cup, but the herdsman only tasted the liquor, and an expression of disgust came over his face as the potent fluid coursed down his throat.

"You do not fancy the liquor," Lope said, in astonishment.

"It burns like fire," the herdsman answered.

"Sure proof of strength and goodness!" Lope exclaimed. "Perhaps you prefer wine?"

"I don't know," the herdsman replied, simply.

"Don't know!" cried the adventurer, thoroughly astonished.

"No; I never tasted this liquid fire before," the other said, disgust in his tone and

face. "It is only fit for dogs; it makes a man a beast," and with a single motion of his wrist he spilled the liquor upon the floor.

"A half-breed who don't drink!" muttered Lope to himself, in wonder; "the age of miracles has come again; next we will hear of an Indian who will not kill, or a Government official who will not steal."

"You wished to tell me something of my parents," the herdsman said, abruptly.

"Yes, but time enough for that; the night is still young. Do you like to hear stories? I have a wonderful store—strange ones, too. I'll tell you one that your father once told me; that is, when I say 'your father,' I mean my old comrade-in-arms, whose son I think you are," Lope said, without giving the herdsman a chance to answer his question.

"What makes you think that I am the son of your friend?" asked the half-breed, abruptly.

"Because you look so much like him—you are his living image. The only difference I can note is that you are darker in color than he. I'd willingly wager what little I have in the world that your mother was an Indian girl."

"Yes; I can remember that."

"You do remember a little of your childhood, then?"

"Yes, but only a little," the herdsman answered, slowly, "and after that little comes a blank, then a new life."

"Perhaps I may be able to fill out that blank, and thus join the old and the new life together?"

The half-breed shook his head in doubt.

"I'll try before we part this night!" Lope exclaimed. "But now for your father's story. First, though, to discover whether we are watched or not. This beggar of an innkeeper has ears longer than a mule's, and a tongue that seldom rests."

Lope rose, went to the inner door, and opened it softly.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE ATTACK.

GIRALDA released herself gently from her lover's embrace.

"We must part," she murmured; "I dare not stay longer. If my absence should be discovered, some one might come in search of me. I do not think that there is much danger of that, though, for I have made a confidant of Inez, and she has wit enough to conceal my absence."

"When shall I see you again?" Gilbert asked.

"To-morrow afternoon, when the sun begins to lose his power, I shall ride on the prairie, northward by the river," she replied, with a meaning smile.

"And I may seek you there then?"

"The prairie is free to all. If you choose to ride by the river as well as I, what harm is there in it?" Giralda answered, with a charming glance.

"I shall ride to-morrow, and my course will be northward by the river," the Mustangar said.

"Oh, how dreadful it is that we are obliged to devise and plot how, where and when to meet!" the girl cried, impatiently.

"My love is so strong, and you are so worthy of it, that I should not be ashamed to have all the world know of it."

Giralda, but one more secret meeting, and then we will act openly," the Mustangar said, resolutely. "I will go to your father, tell him that I love you, and ask him frankly for the priceless treasure that he has the power to give."

"And if he refuses you?" murmured the girl, softly, again nestling close to her lover's breast.

"The course of action rests with you," Gilbert replied. "Consent to go with me and I'll take you, in spite of all Mexico."

"It is a fearful thing to disobey a parent's will," Giralda said, slowly.

"Yes, and yet more fearful still for a parent to force his daughter to wed a man she can not love."

"You are right!" the girl cried, abruptly. "If my father refuses his consent, then I must go without it, and in your love find excuse for the disobedient act."

"My own brave girl!" exclaimed the Mustangar, fondly.

"Good-night," murmured the girl, softly; "though absent, your face will be ever before my eyes, your voice ever ringing in my ears. It will seem a long time till to-morrow's sunset."

"Good-night."

Again the young lover held the soft form of the Mexican maid within his arms, and kissed the ripe, dewy lips, so full of the freshness of warm, young blood, and then Giralda glided away like a specter in the darkness.

The Mustangar watched her disappear with a heavy heart. It seemed like a part of his life torn away from him.

"Shall I ever win her?" he asked himself, in doubt. "It does not seem possible. I'll make the attempt, though, even if it cost me my life. Her love I have already won; I am sure of that, and if fortune will but aid me, I will carry her far from here and in my own Tennessee home find that priceless joy which her love alone can give."

The Mustangar turned to depart.

A single step had he gone when, from the shelter of a cluster of cactuses, three dark forms sprang upon him.

The American was to the tolls.

Mechanically he thrust out his arm and parried the knife-stroke aimed at his heart by the first assailant. A second more and his iron knuckles, shot forward with all the strength of his vigorous arm, felled a second one to the earth; but the third of the three, snake-like, grappled with him, and, with a dextrous twist, brought the Mustangar down to the earth. Over and over they rolled, in close embrace.

The other two—for the man stricken to the ground by the arm of the American had gained his feet—with gleaming knives sought for an opportunity to slay the Mustangar.

Then, from the shelter of the bushes, some five paces distant, came a burst of flame. 'Twas a rifle-shot, and the taller of the two who had so unceremoniously attacked the American dropped to the ground with a howl of agony.

The other ruffian essayed to escape, but forth from the thicket came a dark shadow; the butt of a rifle swept through the air and came crashing down with terrific force upon the head of Red Jose, for it was the half-breed White Indian who was attempting to fly.

With a sullen groan the half-breed went down to the earth, stunned.

A second shadow followed the first from the thicket, one slither in form and carrying a light rifle in hand.

The first shadow, who had dealt Red

Jose such a fearful blow, was Davy Crockett; the second, who had fired the shot which had laid the chief of the White Indians, Michael Dago, in the dust, was Silver Spear, the Red Mazepa!

By the time that Crockett and the Indian girl reached the side of Gilbert, the Mustangar had conquered his assailant, Pepe the Snake, and, with his iron hand choking the breath out of him, held him firmly to the ground despite his efforts to rise.

"Wake snakes! but we've whipped tarantula right out of them, the p'isoned sarapints!" cried Crockett, in triumph.

"I thank you for my life!" exclaimed the Mustangar, still holding the writhing Mexican in a grasp of iron.

"Nary time!" replied the borderer; "but this splendidous slier-critter hyer; the gal you saved from the back of the wild hoss."

"And who thus repays the debt she owed," said the girl, in her low, soft tones.

"But what on yearth have you got thar? a pig, a 'coon, or a grizzly b'ar?" asked Crockett, with a grin, referring to the struggling Mexican.

"Worse; a cowardly Mexican murderer," replied the Mustangar, his knife at the throat of the Snake, threatening instant death.

"Kill the durned skunk," ejaculated Crockett, enjoying the terror of the yellow ruffian.

"Mercy, senior!" gasped the Snake.

"Would you have shown mercy to me had fortune favored your attack?" asked Crockett, sternly.

"I only acted under orders," the Mexican said, in extreme terror.

"The mean, sneaking cuss ought to die," cried Crockett; "but don't soil your knife by stickin' it into him; jest hop up his head, and let me grin him to death."

"Who employed you to murder me?" asked the Mustangar.

"I don't know," the Mexican gasped.

"You lie, you son of a perairie dog!" cried Crockett, expressing his contempt for the prostrate Mexican, by bestowing a hearty kick upon that unfortunate gentleman.

"Spit out who it was, or I'll boot you to death, by thunder!"

The Snake glared around him. No avenue of escape appeared to his view; he was a helpless prisoner in the hands of the man whose life he had sought. He had little doubt that the stalwart American would keep his word, and the slight touch that he had already felt of the muscular foot of the borderer, had fully convinced him that to be kicked to death was not the most pleasant ending possible.

"If I speak, will you let me go free?" he asked, humbly.

"Yes," Gilbert replied.

"Don't you do it, Gil!" cried Crockett. "Make him speak, and then let me see his eyes. I ain't had a raw Mexican for some time, and my jaws rally water for this fat little yaller cuss," and Crockett smacked his lips with a hearty crack.

Pepe groaned in terror.

"Oh, senior, don't let that cannibal eat me!" he cried.

"If I can't have the hull of him, jest gi'n me his big toe, and one of his ears, for a tit-bit, and I won't growl a mite," pleaded Crockett, with mock earnestness.

"Spare me, and I will tell all I know," cried Pepe, in abject terror.

"Go on; but beware how you attempt to deceive us!" said the Mustangar, sternly.

"Ef he lies a mite, I'll tan his hide to make me moccasins!" exclaimed Crockett. Again Pepe shuddered at the fearful threat.

"I will speak nothing but the truth," he said, earnestly. "Ponce de Bandera wished us to attack you, and placed us in ambush."

"I reckoned that it was either the old Don or the young Mexican cuss," Crockett murmured.

Gilbert did not doubt that the prostrate ruffian spoke the truth. He rose to his feet, releasing the Mexican.

"Begone," he said.

The Snake did not wait for a second bidding, but sprang quickly to his feet.

"Come hyar, an' let me cut off your ear!" cried Crockett.

With a single bound the Mexican disappeared in the thicket.

Crockett examined the two who had fallen in the struggle.

Dago was bleeding profusely, but still breathed, while Red Jose seemed to be dead, killed outright.

"I reckoned that he wouldn't be worth much for this world arter I fitched him a lick with my rifle-butt, unless he had a head thicker'n a bufler bull's," Crockett remarked.

"We'll leave them to their fate," Gilbert said, and the three quitted the spot.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE STORY OF THE HALF-BREED.

THE PANTHER LISTENED attentively at the door for a few moments, then he opened it softly, and looked into the inner room. A candle was burning on the table, and Diego sat by it, his head resting on his arms, which were laid upon the table. He was evidently sound asleep. If the Panther had had doubts regarding this fact, the lengthened snore which came from the sleeper would have removed them.

The adventurer closed the door softly, and returned again to the table.

The herdsman had watched his movements narrowly, a peculiar light shining in his dark eyes. There was the same strange expression upon his face which had puzzled the keen wits of the Panther.

Evidently the half-breed was not quite so simple as he pretended to be.

"Good; the beggar is sleeping soundly," Lope said, resuming his former seat at the table. "I hate eavesdroppers, and though our conversation can not concern any one but ourselves, still I do not care to have some meddling fool overhear it."

The half-breed nodded assent, but spoke not.

"Now for the story. In the first place I will state that your father always declared that it was founded on truth."

"My father?"

"Yes—of course I mean my old comrade—that man whom you resemble so greatly."

"I understand," the herdsman said, slowly.

"In early youth your father—my old friend, you understand—was a herdsman on a great estate in North-eastern Mexico. The estate was just on the debatable ground of the red Indian and the civilized Mexican. Behind it, Mexico; church, priest, town and smiling harvest-field; before it, the prairie, the painted chiefs, the wigwags of skin, the shining lance, and the keen-edged scalping-knife."

"The owner of the vast estate was a man some eight and twenty years of age. In person, tall and straight, coal-black hair and eyes, a long, pointed beard growing from the chin, but smoothly shaven on the cheeks. The coal-black hair curled down over his shoulders, fine as silk and glossy as the coat of the wild mare. His face, though exposed to prairie wind and sun, was as white and as fair as the skin of a woman reared within a dark convent's walls."

Lope paused for a moment, his eyes attentively fixed upon the face of the other.

The features of the herdsman showed traces of strong agitation. Mechanically he passed his hand across his brow as though by the action to quicken thought.

The Panther noted the strange movements of the half-breed with a quiet smile.

"You seem deeply interested in my story," he said, carelessly, "and yet it is only the beginning—only the description of one of the characters that is to figure in it."

"I can not remember—" the herdsman said, vaguely.

"Can not remember what?" Lope asked, in affected astonishment.

"Can not remember where I have seen this man whom you have described," the half-breed said, slowly, and in evident bewilderment.

"Oh! you think that you have seen him, then?" Lope cried, quickly.

"Yes; I am sure that I have seen such a man, but it seems to me that it was in a dream rather than in reality," the herdsman replied, a look of painful bewilderment on his face.

"I can remember the long, dark hair curling around the neck, the white features, the pointed beard. I can remember touching the beard with my hand, the hair soft as the brain-tanned deer-skin. Oh!" and the herdsman pressed both his hands convulsively to his temples, "it makes my head ache to think. What spell have you put upon me?" he demanded, fiercely, rising and extending his hands threateningly toward the adventurer.

Lope regarded him with a quiet smile.

"Easy and gently, senior," he said calmly. "It is not my fault if the story that I tell calls up a flood of thoughts. Rather thank me for giving your memory work."

"It is this cursed liquor of fire that I have swallowed that has maddened me!" the half-breed exclaimed in strange excitement, a wonderful contrast to his usual icy bearing.

Then, with a sudden movement, he seized the flask of mescal and dashed it through the lattice window. Lope watched the action, but made no movement to prevent it.

For a moment the half-breed glared at him, and then, as if ashamed of his angry passion, sunk into his chair, sullenly.

"I must be an enchanter to raise such a storm with words alone!" Lope exclaimed, with his usual baffling smile.

"Go on!" muttered the half-breed, hoarsely.

"A moment, gentle senior!" Lope said, with a calming wave of the hand. "You broken lattice made some noise when it was shattered. Before I go on, let me discover whether the long-eared Diego still sleeps."

Lope rose from his seat and again opened the door leading to the inner room.

The Mexican host still slumbered, his head resting on the table.

"This fellow makes a business of sleep; no cat-like slumbers for him."

Fully satisfied, Lope resumed his seat.

"Now for my story again. The owner of the vast estate possessed a young and beautiful wife; I say beautiful, yet her skin was red and the blood of the great Comanche nation flowed in her veins. She was an Indian girl. Her husband had found her wounded near to death on the prairie. He had taken her home, cured the gory state of the horns of the buffalo bull, then married her. Two children were born unto him—a boy and girl.

"At the time that my story commences, the boy was about four years old, the girl a year younger. Your father used to take great delight in carrying the young heir in many a wild chase over the great prairie, mounted on a milk-white mustang of surpassing beauty."

Again the herdsman started; again the breath came thick and fast, and the great cords knotted on the forehead.

"A milk-white mustang!" he murmured, dreamily; "I remember; all white but a black muzzle."

"Yes, I think that your father in telling of the steed he used to ride when he carried the young heir in his prairie gallops, said that he was marked as you describe."

"My father—" again the tone of doubt; again the strange look in the herdsman's eyes.

"I mean my old friend, of course—the man whom you so strangely resemble—who I think is your father?"

"To resume," and Lope fixed his gaze upon the dark face of the herdsman, a little light of triumph shining in his keen eyes.

"The owner of the vast estate had an enemy—a man who sought his life. One night the whoop of the wild Indians sounded around the hacienda. Flame and steel had come to do their work of slaughter. My friend was one of the first aroused by the attack. He clasped the boy and girl to his breast, mounted the milk-white mustang, and made a bold dash for life. Fortune favored him. In the darkness he escaped unnoticed. He gained a place of safety, left his children there, and then, when morning came, he returned to see what had transpired during his absence. A scene of slaughter met his eyes. The owner of the vast estate—the man with the white face and the long black hair, mortally wounded, had found a grave within the rushing current of the Sego."

"The Sego!" cried the herdsman, with a glance of fire.

"Yes; did I not mention that the estate I have referred to was washed by the Sego?"

"No."

"It was my carelessness, then," Lope said. "The wife was still living; her lips told the story of the slaughter, and then she died. Now, the natural question is, why did not my friend bring back the children to claim the estate? I will explain. My friend was a cunning fellow and somewhat skilled in prairie craft. He was fully satisfied that the Indians were white men in disguise—that the owner of the hacienda had fallen by the hand of a brother. He knew that that brother would be the guardian of the infant heirs, and he guessed that in a second attempt he would not fail to remove all obstacles between himself and the estate he coveted. So, without betraying to mortal that the heirs still lived—letting all believe that they had perished either in the

flames or in the river, he took service with the murderous brother. A short six months came and went, and the Mexican moon shone clear in the heavens. By its light the Comanches rode to slaughter. At the dead hour of night they attacked the little settlement where the two children had been placed for safe-keeping. What force could withstand five hundred red warriors led by the 'Horse-tamer,' at that time the great chief of the Comanches? The attack succeeded, and the two children disappeared forever.

"This is my friend's story."

The herdsman looked at the adventurer for a moment, keenly.

"And my father told you this story?"

"Yes."

"You speak lies! It is your own story! You are the herdsman who once rode the milk-white mustang. All comes back to me now. The dream of my childhood is reality. I am the heir to the great estate you spoke of. I can remember the rides on the prairie—the midnight attack—then, the priest with whom you placed me, and after that the Indians' raid. My sister and I were carried away by one of the Indian warriors. Then came a fierce encounter with the Mexican soldiers; the savages were beaten and forced to fly; I was retaken by the Mexicans. My sister disappeared, I know not where. But, my father's name? tell it to me."

"What will you give me for the knowledge?" quoth Lope, with a charming smile.

(To be continued—commenced in No. 102.)

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AN AP-OYSTER-PHE.

BY JOE JOY, JR.

Thou lonely stranger from the unslumbering main,
An impious hand hath torn thee from thy home,
Where lie the mold'ring wrecks of sunken ships,
And sold thee with some others of thy friends
At the low price of eighteen cents for six!
How did thy tender heart within these mounds
To leave the loving bivalve of thy choice!
What sad farewells rung under the green sea,
And waving hands waved a long adieu!

And, oh, what tears bedewed thy pensive eyes
As slowly through the nether deeps thou rose,
Fast in the clutches of the gnat's wings,
And saw'st thy captor, an old oysterman,
Who chewed tobacco as he piled his trade,
And heard him say, "A jolly haul, by jing."

Me thinks there is sorrow in the sea
O'er thine absence, thou sweet, edible thing!
Thy darling love no more thou wilt serenade
With tender songs, on her front step by night,
Or draw sweet numbers from thy tuneful shell.
Nor wilt thou meet her at the trysting place,
Nor take thy evening ramble by her side.

I see thee lying on my plate to-day,
With much regret and a keen appetite,
And thy symmetrical proportions call
The praises of the hungriest mouth of man.
Thou art the ideal of my dreams, the being
That my soul hungers for three times a day
With other company, such as sauce and things,
Two numerous oysters when a morsel
Is hungry enough to swallow a rat-trap.
To get the piece of cheese it's baited with.
Thou'rt gone! Thy trip was quick, but I re-
main
Your most devoted and affectionate friend.

Fairy Story.

The Wonderful Ball.

BY E. WILLETT.

IN THREE PARTS—PART II.

HARRY was very glad when the horse's feet touched the ground, and he found himself alive, with no limbs broken.

He looked around, and saw that he was in a narrow place, between two great walls of rock, that towered up so high on each side of him that he could see only a narrow strip of sky over his head. There was no water in this place, nor any plant or other living thing, except himself and the pony; all was dark, dismal and forbidding. To add to the horrors of the place, each end was closed up with a wall of rock, similar to those at the sides. There was no more chance to get out, Harry thought, than if he had been at the bottom of a very deep well.

The pony had been growing smaller, while Harry was looking about him, until the boy's feet touched the ground, and he found himself on foot, without the trouble of dismounting. In a few minutes the pony was no bigger than when he first came out of the ball, and he hopped up on Harry's hand, and whinnied, as if to make known that he wanted to get back into the ball.

This did not suit Harry, who was right angry with the pony for having brought him into such a terrible place, where he must surely starve to death, as it would be impossible to get out.

"I'll not let you go back," he said, quite peevishly. "You have brought me into this place, and you must take me out of it. You had better do it, or I will hurt you."

As Harry said this, the ball that was in his pocket began to swell, and gave him a strange sensation. He tried to take it out; but it was so big that he could not budge it. He was fairly frightened, and knew not what he should do, until he remembered what the fairy had told him, and felt that he had not been acting right. He spoke kindly to the horse, and the ball popped out of his pocket, and the pony gladly jumped into it.

Harry then tapped his nose three times with the ball, hoping that some means of getting out of that place would be given him. The ball flew open, and out came a tiny hammer, no bigger than his little finger. It grew larger, but was not a heavy hammer when it was at its biggest.

"What, now, am I expected to do with this useless tool?" said the boy. "The fairy must surely be very silly, if she thinks that I can break my way through the solid rock with this mite of a hammer."

He stepped forward, and laughed as he struck the stone with the hammer. To his great surprise the rock flew open like a door, leaving a space which he could easily enter. He hastened to pass through, and the sight that he then saw fully repaid him for his trouble and anxiety.

A valley lay before him, more beautiful than any thing he had ever seen, with green meadows, clear running streams, flowers of every hue, and the sweetest perfumes, singing-birds of the most gorgeous plumage, and splendid trees loaded with the richest fruit.

A pleasant walk, paved with pebbles that shone like silver, led to a very pretty brown cottage, the door of which stood invitingly open. In front of the door, near a sparkling little spring, in the cool shade of the broad-leaved trees, sat a little old woman, spinning. As Harry came up the walk, she rose from her seat, and held out her hand, and he recognized the fairy who had given him the ball.

After telling him that she was glad he had come to visit her, she shook a tree, and down tumbled a great pile of ripe apples. She bade Harry help himself, and he ate heartily, as the fruit was far more luscious than any he had ever tasted. When he was satisfied, she made him sit down on the soft grass in the shade, and began to talk to him. She told him that she was very glad that he had learned how to use his wonderful ball, and that he was not afraid to use it, as she wished to ask him to do her a great favor.

Harry, who felt in a very good humor after his feast of apples, as well as very brave, declared that he was ready to do any thing she might wish him to do, and begged her to tell him the nature of the favor.

"I have an enemy," she said, "the wicked fairy Spretta. Out of spite she stole my only child, my son, who, were it not for her wiles, would now be one of the princes of Elfin Land. When she had got him into her power, she changed him by her spells and enchantments, so that it is impossible for him to return to his own people, and he is a slave among the ignorant barbarians who live over yonder," pointing down the valley. "If he could once step across the line into Elfin Land, he would be free from her enchantments; but he is a cripple, and not able to walk."

"How shall I know him?" asked Harry, who was eager to undertake the task.

"When you see a little deformed fellow, who is kicked and cuffed by everybody, you may know that he is the prince."

"No doubt that I will bring him to you."

"I hope you may, as I have waited a long time—ever since you were born—for you to come and help me. But there is one thing about which I must caution you. If you speak an angry word while you are in that land, you will never be able to bring him across the line."

Harry was sure that he would not permit his anger to rise, and he gladly darted away, in the direction pointed out by the fairy.

He went through the beautiful meadow, and waded across a little brook. Then he looked back, and saw—nothing at all. Elfin Land had disappeared, and a heavy white mist hung over the place where it had been.

This was strange enough to Harry; but he pressed on, not at all daunted, through the rough and barren country in which he then found himself, until he came to a town, composed of miserable little mud-huts, inhabited by a race of small, bow-legged people, with big heads and long arms, so ugly and dirty that Harry was almost afraid to look at them.

They did nothing to interfere with the boy, however, and he walked up the filthy street, looking for the fairy's son, until he came to the center of the town. There he saw a little fellow, not half as big as himself, dragging his lean and withered form through the dirt on his hands and knees. Over him stood one of the ugly little men, who kicked and cuffed him until he was tired.

Not knowing what to do, Harry sat down on a stone, and crossed one leg over another.

"Let me ride upon your foot, master," said the ugly little man, and with that he at once jumped astride of Harry's foot. No sooner had he done so, perching himself on the toe, than the foot began to grow,



Tracked to Death. Unwelcome News.

and it grew so fast that the barbarian, before he knew what was happening to him, found himself high up in the air, far above the tops of the mud-hovels.

"Let me down, master!" he cried, at the top of his voice.

"Why did you beat that poor little fellow?" asked Harry.

"Because he is my slave. Let me down, and I will give you a marble palace and a mountain of gold."

"You have nothing of the kind to give. Give me your slave, as you call him, and I will let you down."

The barbarian promised, after some hesitation, and Harry's long foot shortened so rapidly, that the old fellow came to the ground as if he had jumped down.

Harry then took the deformed boy on his back, bidding him clasp his hands around his neck, and hastened down the filthy street. He had not gone far, when he heard a great clamor behind him. Looking around, he saw that the street was crowded with the barbarians, all armed with clubs, stones, and balls of mud, and all looking angry enough to eat him up. Harry knew that they must soon overtake him, and he began to be alarmed.

He was not so badly frightened that he forgot his ball, but took it from his pocket, and struck it thrice against his nose. Instantly it opened, and a miniature fiddle and bow jumped out into his hand.

"What shall I do with these things?" he thought. "I never played a note on the fiddle, and I'm sure that I don't feel merry."

But he took the fiddle in one hand, and the bow in the other, and the bow immediately set to work, playing a livelier tune than Harry had ever heard. At the first note of the music, the barbarians ceased from following him, and began to dance with all their might.

CHARLIE, a bright four-year old, of Norwich, was in an unamiable mood, one day, and his mother admonished him to look pleasant. But his face continued to wrinkle, till she remarked, "Why, Charlie, I am astonished to see you making faces at your mother!" Charlie brightened up at once, and retorted: "Why, I calculated to laugh, but, mamma, my face slipped." The "calculation" was suddenly worked out in chorus.

Camp-Fire Yarns.

From the Brink of the Fall.

BY RALPH RINGWOOD.

"Yes," said Old John, in connection with a remark one of the rangers had made. "I think the man known as the Spotted Ranger was one of, if not the most, in many respects, extraordinary individuals I have ever heard of on the border."

This was strong language for Old John to use, and every ear was instantly pricked up to hear what was to follow.

"When I first knew him he lived in a little ranch up on the head-waters of the Colorado, entirely alone among the Comanches, upon whom he made unrelenting war, and yet, for a long time, set the entire tribe at defiance. Small in stature, but lithe and active as a deer, he did not look the dangerous man he really was."

"But I started to tell you of an incident in which the Spotted Ranger, as well as myself, were concerned, and which gave me a pretty good idea of what a man can do when he once sets himself, head on, to do it."

"Late one afternoon, while hanging on the trail of a large band of Comanchi, who, I feared, were making for the settlements below, I came across fresh wagon-tracks, which, with the other sign, showed that a party of travelers of some kind had crossed the trail I was following at right angles, and shortly after the Indians had passed. The red-skins were moving southward, while the fresher trail tended due west."

"Well, for a bit I was in a fix."

or six people, one of whom was a woman. The river was full to the very brim, and driftwood, with now and then a huge old cottonwood, was shooting down with the swift current with resistless force.

"It was at the very moment I arrived on the spot that one of these last named, a tremendous tree that had been washed out from the bank, came rushing down, end on, upon the devoted raft, the long, jagged roots projecting out and towering on high, as though they were great arms ready to grasp and crush the frail craft that lay in its way."

"Bully!" cried an old borderer. "Thet must 'a' been a buster! eh, Billy?"

"Wuss'n thet," was the answer.

And so for a minute or two the chaff went on, for your real ranger don't care much for fancy pictures.

"Lite out, ole John, an' tell us ef them 'ere arms grupp'd the gal," said Rube, and the rest became silent.

With the coolness that marked every action of his life, the speaker continued as though he had not been interrupted in the least.

"The tree struck the raft square in the center, and down it went as though it had been but a leaf in its way."

"Grasp the roots! I heard a keen, clear voice from the other side ring out, just as the crash came, and a moment later, as the tree slightly swung round, I saw that at least one of the number had obeyed the caution, and that one was—"

"Ther gal! I'll bet my ole coon-skin!" almost shouted an excited ranger, who, with all the rest, had again become deeply interested.

"You're right, there, 'Lige," replied old

"I knew not what caused me to glance toward this tree, but as I did so, I saw a singular-looking creature, shaped like a man, but clothed with a covering of skins, and spotted like a leopard, spring down the bank, and quicker than lightning mount into the tree, and run out along one of the long limbs that projected over the water."

"I now saw his plan, but the next minute I began to think it wouldn't work."

"The roots of the floating tree were higher than the limb, and I saw they would sweep the very leaves from off it. But there was no time to think. The drift was now within twenty yards of the beach."

"I saw the singular-looking man creep still further out, and heard him shout to the girl to stand up and be ready to grasp him, and hold on for her life, and then, as the brave woman obeyed, and stood erect upon the topmost root, the crash came."

"You all know that water-beech is about as tough as any thing well can be, and this was all that saved them."

"As the heavy drift struck the limber branches, they bent down until they were level with the banks; the smaller branches cracked and broke, and the leaves and bark were stripped with the force of the shock. I was certain that both would be swept over, but that spotted chap was one of the kind that never let go when they once get hold."

"While the fight between the drift and the beech was going on, and I was watching to see the two hurled into the water, I suddenly saw the spotted figure swing upward to the branch above, the girl clinging to his belt, and then again, as if he had been free of all weight, to the next and next limb, each higher than the other, until both were free from all danger."

"Hooray!" shouted two or

three.

"I went below and crossed on a log, and when I got back to the tree, they were both there, waiting for the others to come."

"This was my first acquaintance with the Spotted Ranger," continued old John, "and I told him then that the feat he had performed was ahead of any thing I had ever seen, but he only smiled and said it was nothing. So it was in comparison with some I afterward witnessed, and heard of his performing; but you all, boys, know how ticklish a job it was, even if people green in such matters don't."

Short Stories.

Curiosities of Science (Continued).—The time when the attractive property of the magnet was first discovered, is by no means known; certain, however, it is, that mankind were acquainted with it at a very early period. Father Kircher endeavors to prove, that the Hebrews were acquainted with the magnet's singular property of attracting iron; and from Plutarch it appears, that the Egyptians were not ignorant of it. Pythagoras, Ptolemy, Hippocrates, Empedocles, Democritus, Leucippus, Epicurus, and several other ancient philosophers knew and admired this wonderful property of the magnet. Thales and Anaxagoras were so struck with it, as to imagine that the magnet had a soul; and Plato said that the cause of its attraction was divine. But the directive property of the magnet was not known to the ancients. To the simple application of this property, which was either discovered or introduced into Europe about five centuries ago, mankind is indebted principally for the discovery of a new continent nearly equal to the old one, for an extensive commerce between the most distant nations, and for an accurate knowledge of the shape and size of the world we inhabit.

The Peripatetics maintained, that the creation of a vacuum was impossible even to supernatural power. This dogma was first shaken by a circumstance which happened to some workmen employed by the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Having sunk a deep well, they endeavored to bring the water to the surface by a common sucking pump, but found, to their surprise, that they could only make it ascend to the height of about thirty feet. Galileo, whose talents had gained him great celebrity and respect, was consulted in this emergency. His answer was, that although nature does dislike a vacuum, there is a certain limit to her antipathy, equivalent to the pressure of a column of water eighteen palms high.

Copernicus, who flourished in the beginning of the seventeenth century, had no sooner stored his mind with an extensive knowledge in mathematics, than he applied it to correcting the system of astronomy which then prevailed. After examining the various hypotheses that had been invented for the solution of the celestial phenomena, he adopted that of Pythagoras, which makes the sun to be the center of the system, and supposes the earth to move not only round the sun, but also round its own axis. This system Copernicus began to consider, and to write upon, when he was thirty-five years of age. He employed himself in contemplating the phenomena carefully; in making mathematical calculations; in examining the observations of the ancients, and in making new ones of his own. After more than twenty years chiefly spent in this manner, he brought his scheme to perfection, and established that system of the world, which goes by his name, and is now universally received. His system was, however, then looked upon as a most dangerous heresy; for which he was thrown into prison by Pope Urban VIII, and not suffered to come out until he had recanted his opinion; that is, until he had renounced the testimony of his senses.

The first person who proposed to ascertain the relative longitude of any place or ship at sea, by means of a horological machine for indicating the time of the first meridian, was Gemma Frisius, about the year 1530. This method was described and recommended in Carpenter's geography as early as the year 1635; but the state in which horological machines were at that time, prevented his accomplishing the design.